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Rifkind sees serious peace efforts
BEIRUT (AP) — Britain's foreign secretary said Saturday the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin would spur efforts to get the stalled Middle East peace process off the ground. Malcolm Rifkind also said there can be no total peace in the Middle East unless Lebanon enjoys peace. "I believe that the tragic death of Mr. Rabin would not have ended the peace process. Far from it, there may be serious new efforts to take the peace process further forward," Mr. Rifkind told a news conference after a one-hour meeting with his Lebanese counterpart, Fays Bouze. Efforts will be made to establish peace between Israel and both Syria and Lebanon, he said, without elaborating. However, Mr. Rifkind acknowledged that the U.S.-sponsored peace process has encountered difficulties. "Peace will not be easy because there have been many years of distrust, misapprehensions and mutual hatred which have to be overcome," he said. "But I sense that there is a determination from people of goodwill throughout the region to make a new effort and to make further progress in this respect," he added.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية نشرت بالمؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Algerians cast absentee votes
PARIS (AFP) — French police intervened and several people were taken to hospital, amid scenes of confusion and hysteria as thousands of Algerians living in France cast absentee ballots Saturday in their country's presidential elections. In Lyon, central eastern France, where some 55,000 voters are registered, several thousand Algerians from five nearby departments crowded together as soon as polling stations opened, and about 40 people fell ill. Some 24 people were sent to hospital and about 30 were treated on the spot, rescue services said. Police set up barriers and handed out sugar and mineral water to the crowd. In Rouen, northwest France, police tried to organise unruly masses of voters, and officials called for calm, as Algerians tore up their polling cards in protest at the lack of organisation. Scenes of disorder also took place in the southern cities of Nice, Marseille and Bordeaux and a woman in her 40s was taken ill. Around 620,000 registered Algerian electors were due to cast their ballots over three days — Saturday, Sunday and Thursday — at 94 polling stations set up at 22 centres, mainly consulates, around France.

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Senate rallies behind King's directives

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday received a cable from Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi voicing the Senate's support of the King and his stands expressed in his speech delivered Thursday before senior army, intelligence, civil defence and public security officers.

Mr. Lawzi said the Senate, along with the Lower House of Parliament, was prepared to update legislation to meet the needs of the new stage, and preserve the national principles enshrined in the Constitution.

He said the Senate would work on ending excesses and irresponsible behaviour "which harm our national unity, national norms and values."

In his address Thursday, King Hussein expressed anger over the tactics adopted by the country's hardliners who oppose the peace agreement with Israel and those who rejoiced at the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The King also strongly reiterated his vow that anyone "who seeks to destroy national unity" would be his "foe forever."

The King assailed the local media for not living up to the challenges of the day and said journalists critical of the peace process were demoralising people, propagating defeatism and sowing dissension and calling for updating laws to cater for the needs of the present stage.

On Friday, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said his government would adopt measures necessary to protect Jordan's national unity. The Lower House also issued a statement supporting the King and expressing readiness to update legislation in a manner that would protect the country's national unity and democratisation process.

Mr. Lawzi said in his cable that the Senate would safeguard all the King's achievements and stop excesses on the Kingdom's democracy.

"Since its establishment, Jordan was an Arab and Hashemite fortress embodying the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, which marked the banners of freedom, unity and independence for all Arabs," the Senate speaker said.

The Kingdom was honoured to raise the banner of the Great Arab Revolt and to inherit its principles, Mr. Lawzi added.

The Kingdom refuses to have "the elements of evil and darkness in its sanctity" working to undermine its security, the unity of its people and its democracy.

Jordan celebrates King's 60th birthday

Tens of thousands march through Amman, launching national festivities

HM thanks the nation, pledges continued partnership for better future

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has expressed his pride in belonging to Jordan and his appreciation and gratitude to the Jordanian people for expressing their feelings of affection and loyalty to him on his 60th birthday.

The King was speaking at Basman Palace where he received the higher committee in charge of organising celebrations marking King Hussein's 60th birthday, including a public march held in Amman on Saturday.

"I would like to thank Sharif Zeid, my life long companion in our efforts towards serving Jordan and the Arab Nation, for his kind words and true and beautiful feelings," said King Hussein in reply to a speech by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

"I seize this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to the Jordanian family... its men, women, young and old who were my companions in the long march and never-ending struggle in life for achieving what is good for the future of all people who bow only to the God Almighty and who set examples for others by national unity and sacrifices, democracy, pluralism and respect for human rights," King Hussein said.

"I pray to God to guide Jordan and help it achieve its aspirations and the Jordanian people to remain steadfast and true to their standards and their beliefs and carry out their mission as best as they could one generation after another," the King said.

"As long as I live, my heart will be full of love for this people to whom I proudly belong. I thank you all for your kind feelings," King Hussein concluded.

At the outset of the meeting, the prime minister expressed Jordan's good wishes to the Monarch on his birthday.

"I am honoured to convey to you on behalf of the committee and the cabinet ministers our best wishes to Your Majesty on this dear occasion," said the prime minister.

The celebrations, which started in Amman today (Saturday) and will later extend to the other governorates, are an expression of the Jordanian people's allegiance to the leader of this country and their pride in the country's achievements under his reign, Sharif Zeid said.

"I belong to a generation

which was honoured to accompany Your Majesty in the struggle and long march over the past decades, watching Jordan progressing step by step, proud of its achievements under your reign following in the footsteps of the Great Arab Revolt led by Al Hussein Ben Ali and the founder of the Kingdom the late King Abdullah Ben Al Hussein," the prime minister said.

"In the name of the marchers today, farmers, students, workers, young and old men and women from all over Jordan, and in the name of all Jordanians I would like to express our heart-felt congratulations and best wishes to Your Majesty on this happy occasion," he said.

Present at the meeting were the Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid, Their Highnesses Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary, and Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural secretary, and the King's advisors.

Sharif Zeid presented the King with a gift depicting the logo of the celebrations for the King's birthday.

(Continued on page 7)



Tens of thousands holding posters of His Majesty King Hussein and banners wishing him a happy birthday march through Amman on Saturday (photo by Yousef Allan)

Saudi envoy arrives to take up office, says duty is to consolidate relations

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Saudi Ambassador-designate to Jordan Abdullah Budairi arrived here on Sunday, ending a four-year hiatus in the presence of a Saudi ambassador in Jordan and pledging to work towards "consolidating" Jordanian-Saudi relations.

One of the first tasks awaiting Mr. Budairi, a cousin of King Fahd and a former Saudi ambassador to Bahrain, is to prepare for a visit to Jordan by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal, who in turn will work with his Jordanian counterpart, Abdul Karim Kabariti, on arranging a summit meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and Saudi King Fahd.

Mr. Budairi's arrival here marked another key point in improving Saudi-Jordanian relations strained since the Gulf crisis of 1991.

King Hussein met in New York last month with Saudi Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, who indicated after the meeting that Saudi-Jordanian relations were back to normal.

In arrival statements, Ambassador Budairi said: "My duty is to consolidate

the strong relations that have existed for a long time between Jordan and Saudi Arabia."

"I am very pleased to assume duties after a period of strained relations, which are now 'back to normal, and God willing, they will grow stronger," he was quoted as saying by the Associated Press.

Meanwhile, reports indicated that Kuwaitis were seeing a gradual improvement in ties with Jordan.

Reuters quoted Kuwaiti officials as saying that the emirate had no immediate plans to permit the reopening of the Jordanian embassy in Kuwait, but both sides were working gradually to end the strain in ties.

"Improving the relationship is in the process of discussion, one step at a time," one official told Reuters.

"Things are not tense as they used to be," a foreign Ministry official who declined to be identified was quoted as saying by Reuters.

Mr. Kabariti met with his Kuwaiti counterpart, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, in Cairo in September and both sides agreed to continue to work on improving relations.

News agency reports and analyses from Kuwait indicate that while the government of Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah is might be in favour of resuming normal ties with Jordan, some Kuwaiti officials and members of parliament continued to hold a grudge against the Kingdom for what they perceived as Jordan's support for Iraq after the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah said in comments published by Egypt's Al Ahram newspaper on Friday that it was possible to reconcile with "pro-Iraq" states that realised their "mistake" and showed their support for Kuwait.

According to Reuters, the Kuwaiti cabinet at its regular weekly meeting on Sunday might announce the upgrading of diplomatic relations with Jordan to ambassadorial level and the reopening of the Jordanian embassy in Kuwait.

The Jordanian embassy has been closed since the Gulf war and the Kuwaiti embassy in Amman is headed by a charge d'affaires after Kuwait recalled its ambassador in early 1991.

Crown Prince due in Bahrain today

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan is due in Bahrain today on a two-day visit to the country in response to an invitation from the Bahraini heir-apparent, Sheikh Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Petra quoted Sheikh Hamad as welcoming Crown Prince Hassan's visit to Bahrain and paying tribute to Jordanian-Bahraini relations.

Sheikh Hamad, who also heads the Bahraini Defence Forces, was quoted as saying by Petra that the Crown Prince's visit was a continuation of other visits paid by Prince Hassan to Bahrain as part of efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation.

PLO, Israel nearly finalise W. Bank hand-over details

Arafat to name team to Cairo talks with Hamas

Combined agency dispatches
THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel have nearly completed arrangements for the redeployment of Israeli troops and the handing over of Jenin and six neighbouring West Bank villages to the PLO, a PLO official said on Saturday.

Ismail Jaber, overall commander of the Palestinian security forces in the West Bank, and other senior military officials toured Jenin and inspected police stations in the villages slated to be handed over to the Palestine National Authority (PNA) on Monday.

"Most arrangements have been agreed to with the Israelis and according to our agreement with them, the Palestinian police will enter Jenin and the six villages armed and in full police uniform," Mr. Jaber said after the tour.

Under the self-rule deal Israel will pull its troops out of six West Bank cities and parts of Hebron, starting in Jenin. PLO officials say the withdrawal from the six cities should be completed by Dec. 20.

The redeployment is proceeding on schedule despite last week's assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who signed a Palestinian self-rule deal with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in September.

Mr. Rabin's successor, Shimon Peres, has vowed to continue the peace process.

PLO officials said the handing over ceremony would be held early on Monday in Jenin's military headquarters.

Palestinians in Jenin said the Israeli army had cleared most of its belongings from the military headquarters but was still guarding the building.

Israel turned over the police station to Palestinian police earlier this month. A total of 1,000 Palestinian policemen were scheduled to deploy in Jenin and the surrounding district starting on Monday.

Palestinian security sources said some 500 Palestinian policemen, who had been trained over the past few months in self-ruled Jericho, were already in Jenin as civilians.

Mr. Jaber said the Palestinian police would deploy in Jenin and the nearby villages in two stages, the first group on Monday and the second on Tuesday. Joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols would begin on roads in the area on Tuesday, he said.

In Cairo, Egyptian officials said Mr. Peres will meet Mr. Arafat on Monday.

(Continued on page 7)

Rabin suspects also targeted Palestinians, Shahal reports

Combined agency dispatches
ONE WEEK after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination at a Tel Aviv peace rally, police are convinced a group of religious Jews plotted the murder and planned to carry out attacks on Palestinians.

Amid a national outpouring of grief, thousands of Israelis used the weekend to flock to Mr. Rabin's grave in West Jerusalem and to Kings of Israel Square in Tel Aviv, where he was shot, lighting memorial candles and laying flowers at makeshift shrines.

Many parents took their children to the graveside on Mount Herzl, piled high with wreaths, poems and personal messages.

Radio stations broadcast over and over again the song of peace which Mr. Rabin sang just before he was killed, as well as old interviews with the slain premier.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal described how Jewish zealots conspired over the last two years to use violence to sabotage Israel's agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Palestinian self-rule.

"We are talking about two

levels of activity: The first was the murder of prime minister, the second was the organising by extremists to attack Palestinian targets after the implementation of Israeli redeployment (in the West Bank)," Mr. Shahal said in a television interview later on Friday.

Mr. Shahal made the statement hours after police announced the arrest of a sixth suspect in connection with Mr. Rabin's killing. All of those in custody, including confessed assassin Yigal Amir, 25, are religious Jews.

Mr. Shahal said Amir had tried twice before to kill Mr. Rabin.

"But there were apparently additional attempts in which he and others, or others alone tried to assassinate the prime minister," Mr. Shahal said, without elaborating.

"The murderer... belonged to a cell of Jewish activists which wanted to assassinate the prime minister based on a decree by rabbis who considered the latter as a dictator whom it was legitimate to kill in self-defence," Mr. Shahal said.

He refused to identify the rabbis who authorised the assassination. However, Rabbi Yoel Bin Nun from the West Bank settlement of Ofra threatened to reveal their names.

Orthodox Jews in New York have set up a hotline to raise money to defend Amir and said they were being swamped with calls.

Amir said in court earlier this week he killed Mr. Rabin to stop him handing over land to the PLO.

Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair gave a gloomy warning on Saturday that authorities must be on the lookout for further assassination bids.

"I am among those who think this murder will not lead to a sobering of Israeli society," Mr. Ben-Yair said in remarks broadcast on Israel's Channel Two television.

"What happened (last) Saturday night, that grave incident, clears away a psychological barrier and I can envision in these circumstances another political murder taking place," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of Israelis were expected to

(Continued on page 7)

'Yellow press' needs to be disciplined, but measures should conform with democracy, media experts say

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Journalists and media experts are agreed on the need to tighten the screws on publications that do not uphold journalistic and professional ethics but insist that measures that must be taken to curb sensational and unreliable press should conform with the democratic orientation of the Kingdom.

His Majesty King Hussein on Thursday strongly criticised the performance of both the official media and privately-run newspapers, warning that the Kingdom would no longer tolerate publications that harm the interests of the state.

Informed sources said the government will heed the King's directives to curb "wrongdoing" by the press by amending the Press and

Publication Law to allow for stronger punishment against publications that violate the law and step on the red lines which the Constitution and the National Charter have drawn.

The current law, which was endorsed by Parliament in 1993, mainly fines publications and journalists that violate its provisions. However, the penalty code can be applied in trying cases that involve more serious violations of the law such as harming the national interests of the state or defaming the Royal Family.

Informed sources say the amendments to the law could include empowering the Cabinet with closing down temporarily or permanently publications that violate the law, a provision that existed in the pre-1993 law.

But this should not hap-

pen, journalists and media experts say.

"We must weed out the poisonous plant but without curbing democracy," said veteran journalist and former Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif.

Mr. Sharif agreed with other observers that some weekly tabloids have earned the disrespect and mistrust of citizens and officials alike by ignoring professional ethics and seeking sensationalism at the expense of accuracy. But he pointed out, such a phenomenon is one of the headaches that democracy produces, citing the performance of the "yellow press" in Western democracies.

"Democracy is a great headache but it is the least evil of all systems of government," said Mr. Sharif, who added that solutions to

the problems of unprofessional journalism should be in conformity with the democratic process.

Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Suleiman Al Qudrah pointed to loopholes in the Press and Publication Law which can be amended in ways that would strengthen the democratic process rather than weaken it.

But Mr. Qudrah, who is also editor-in-chief of the Al Rai Arabic daily, said distinction should be made between publishing political views opposed to those of the government and violation of professional rules.

Mr. Qudrah said that two elements in the Press and Publication Law should be promptly addressed. The first concerns the post of chief editor where more restrictions should be put on those who should qualify

for it. He says that it is not enough to demand that chief editors should be members of the JPA because any one who is eligible for occupying such "a sensitive" position should have the necessary experience.

The second loophole, which, Mr. Qudrah says, must be addressed is the kind of punishment that can be applied to publications and journalists who commit what he calls "professional crimes." Maximum punishment should be applied to such kind of crimes, said Mr. Qudrah, adding that newspapers who know that they could end up paying significant amounts of money in fines for violating the law will either stop breaking the law or go bankrupt and disappear from the newstands.

(Continued on page 7)

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Netanyahu holds his fire on Arafat visit to Tel Aviv

TEL AVIV (R) — Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, blamed by Yitzhak Rabin's widow for helping create a climate of hate in Israel, held his fire on Friday over Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's first public visit to Israel.

"I think a bereavement meeting is understandable," Mr. Netanyahu, leader of the right-wing Likud Party, said about the condolence call Mr. Arafat paid on Thursday to Mrs. Rabin's home in Tel Aviv.

"I don't think it should be addressed politically," he told Reuters, six days after Mr. Rabin was assassinated by a religious Jewish militant at a Tel Aviv peace rally.

Mr. Netanyahu still refers to Mr. Arafat as a terrorist despite the Palestinian leader's 1993 peace deal with the Rabin government. He has said he will refuse to negotiate with Mr. Arafat if Likud comes to power in Israel elections scheduled for next November.

But the Likud leader is still stinging from bitter criticism levelled against him by Leah Rabin on Tuesday and he appeared reluctant in the Reuters interview to enter into any heated political debate over the Arafat visit.

"Surely I blame them," Leah Rabin told ABC News on Tuesday, saying Likud legislators had made speeches in parliament against the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal which she said stoked hatred of her husband.

Mr. Netanyahu, 47, is acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres would meet after a traditional Jewish seven-day period of mourning "to jointly declare the need to shun physical and verbal violence."

But he insisted Likud was as committed as ever to a policy opposed to trading land for peace and denied any attempt to blame the right-wing as a whole for the actions of confessed assassin Yigal Amir.

"An assassin's bullet should not change the government's policy and certainly should not change the opposition's policy," the Likud leader said.

Mr. Netanyahu said Mr. Arafat's commitment to Israel's elimination — enshrined in the PLO charter — was the reason he would never negotiate with him.

"It is not a personal problem between me and Mr. Arafat. It's a question of the policies of the organisation. If the PLO stops being the PLO, please come ask me. It will be an interesting question and I will be happy to answer it."

He said he did not believe a Jewish civil war would erupt over the issue of giving back the occupied territories. "I didn't think before Mr. Rabin's assassination, nor do I think now, that we'll descend into civil war. The taboo is enormously powerful."

He said he had no use for extremists — "the wild weeds that grow at the fringe of every camp."

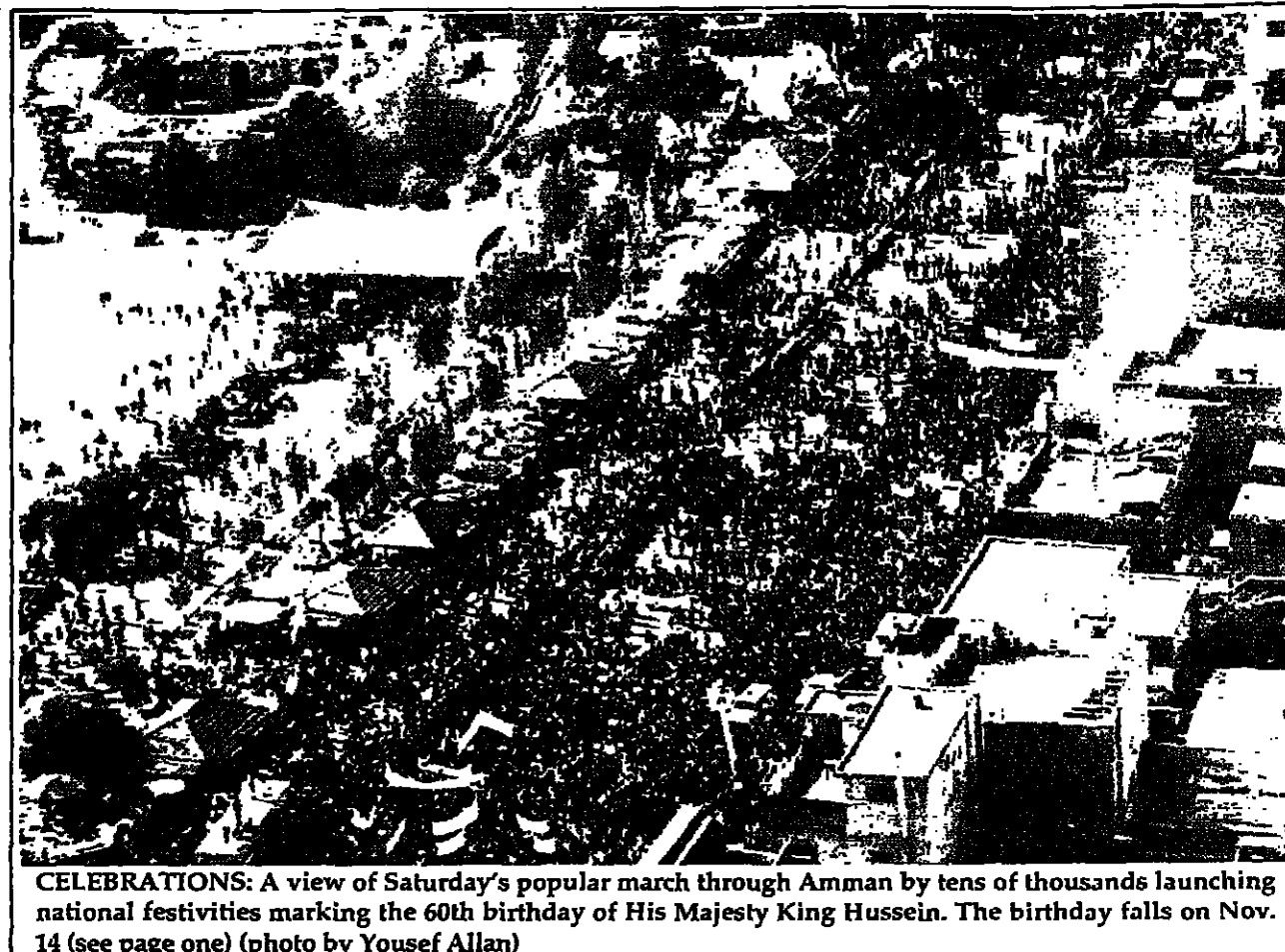
"I say to them: 'I would rather not be elected prime minister rather than rely on your votes.'"

Asked for his message to armed Jewish settlers of the West Bank who disagree with Mr. Rabin's policy, Mr. Netanyahu said: "My message to them is my message to the entire people of Israel... we will decide the future of this country in the ballot box."

He said he always regarded Mr. Rabin as "a Jewish patriot and viewed the killing as 'a national tragedy,' but complained there was something of a 'witch-hunt' on to discredit the Israeli opposition."

He repeated his promise not to address comments by Leah Rabin, the slain leader's widow, that Mr. Netanyahu shared the blame for the violent climate in which the killing occurred.

"We have a saying, 'you don't judge a person in his grief.'"



CELEBRATIONS: A view of Saturday's popular march through Amman by tens of thousands launching national festivities marking the 60th birthday of His Majesty King Hussein. The birthday falls on Nov. 14 (see page one) (photo by Yousef Allan)

Egypt hosts major wargames

A BOARD U.S. SHREVEPORT (R) — Twelve U.S. Marine combat swimmers leapt from helicopters into the Mediterranean on Friday preparing for a mock attack on Egypt's northern coast which will launch the Middle East's biggest joint war games.

The 12 marines, acting as scouts for a 2,000-strong U.S. force which was to storm ashore on amphibious craft on Saturday, plunged with inflatable dinghies into the water from two Sea Knight helicopters hovering just a few metres above the waves.

The Marines were to join landing forces from Egypt and France as well as British paratroopers, forming a coalition to repel an imaginary aggressor trying to seize vital natural resources.

Exercise Bright Star, grouping the four countries and troops from the United Arab Emirates, brings together 55,000 men for a week's training to improve coordination and underline U.S. military commitment to the region, officials say.

"Bright Star is a way of

demonstrating visually that the United States takes its commitments very seriously over here," the Shreveport's commanding officer, Captain John Carter, told reporters on the ship's bridge.

"We are ready to respond in whatever degree is required."

Egypt, a keystone of Washington's military alliance in the Arab World, gets \$1.4 billion in annual U.S. military aid.

Around 33,000 Egyptian troops will take part, along with 22,000 from the United States — who have deployed 1,000 U.S. since

the U.S. since the 1970s. The five countries will stage coordinated amphibious landings, paratroop exercises in the desert, helicopter strikes behind "enemy" lines and a large-scale and offensive to repel enemy forces.

Bright Star, originally a simple U.S.-Egyptian joint exercise, has been held every two years since Egypt signed a U.S.-brokered peace deal

with Israel in 1979.

"I think the Persian Gulf was the turning point," said Capt. Carter in reference to the 1991 U.S.-led multinational force which retook Kuwait from Iraqi troops in Operation Desert Storm.

"Up to then we undertook many operations simply as the United States. The Persian Gulf established a coalition, and since then we have been able to operate as allies," he said.

This year's exercise, the largest launched by the U.S. Army Central Command, includes more than 2,600 sorties, 720 aircraft. Over 100 tanks will also take part as well as 18 ships, including the aircraft carrier USS America.

Egypt, France, the U.S. and UAE will also hold unprecedented "deep strike" raids using advanced attack Apache helicopters.

Marines on board the Shreveport, fresh from joint exercises in Israel, said they hoped the spirit of cooperation might overcome decades of hostility between the Jewish state and its Arab neighbours.

Gamaa chief killed in S. Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — Police shot dead a leader of the militant Gamaa Al Islamiyah on Saturday in a gunbattle in the Fayoum region south of Cairo, police said.

Police discovered Mohamed Ibrahim, who they had been pursuing for months, in the Fayoum village of Basset, 100 kilometres south of Cairo.

Ibrahim was shot dead when police raided his hideout and arrested a colleague hiding with him, police said. Police said Ibrahim had "formed and led" a militant cell of 124 members which carried out several attacks against police in Minya province, a hotbed of militant violence, 300 kilometres south of Cairo.

Security forces broke up the cell in August and arrested 66 of its members, but Ibrahim had eluded police.

The Gamaa, the main militant group fighting to topple the government, warned on Thursday it had renewed its attacks on foreign tourists in Egypt.

I told tourists to "go home" in a statement claiming responsibility for two train attacks in southern Egypt last week which left a total of 14 injured, including two tourists.

Ibrahim's death brought to 909 the number killed since March 1992 when militants began their armed campaign against the government.

Arms haul seized
Egyptian security services have seized a large weapons and explosives haul which had been smuggled from Sudan to use in militant attacks on tourists and officials, police said Saturday.

Police said they found 100 Russian-made grenades, 64 Kalashnikov assault rifles, five RPG rocket launchers, 30 rockets, 15 kilograms of explosives and almost 2,000 bullets in seven separate sites in the southern Egyptian province of Aswan.

They believed "elements from the Sudanese secret services of helping the infiltration of the weapons across the border between the two countries," a police officer said.

Germany defers Islamic meeting after Iran vote

BONN (R) — In a major embarrassment for German diplomacy, Bonn on Friday put back a conference on Islam planned for next week after parliament passed a shock vote saying Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati should be excluded.

Dozens of government deputies including Parliamentary Speaker Rita Suessmuth voted with the opposition Greens and Social Democrats to exclude Mr. Velayati because Tehran had praised the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"I consider it better to postpone the conference. I respect the decision of parliament," Mr. Kinkel said after a crisis meeting of Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

He also denied reports he might resign because of his setback over the conference, which was supposed to foster greater understanding between Muslim and Western countries.

"The conference only makes sense in a situation which is not burdened by consternation over Rabin's murder and outrage about the unacceptable reaction from Tehran," Mr. Kinkel told reporters.

Germany assiduously maintains what it calls a "critical dialogue" with Iran despite objections from its Western allies.

The Bonn conference, planned for Nov. 15-16, was part of a bid to prove such dialogue can foster understanding between the Islamic World and the West.

Foreign ministers from Iran, Bosnia, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Pakistan were expected to attend.

The parliamentary defeat was a double embarrassment to Mr. Kinkel, showing he had not only failed to quell controversy at home about relations with Tehran but also underestimated the potential problems his "critical dialogue" could cause.

Germany's allies, led by the United States and Britain, say Iran sponsors international terrorism and should be shunned.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani had labelled Mr. Rabin's murder "divine revenge" for the killing of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shaghi in Mahla last month, which Tehran blamed on Israel.

Mr. Kinkel told reporters on Thursday that this reaction was unacceptable, but added that "one can't argue for a policy of dialogue (with Iran) and not talk with them."

The Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran hailed the parliament's vote on Friday as a "courageous act."

"The time has come for the international community to impose a complete trade embargo against this regime," it said in a statement issued in Bonn.

Mr. Kinkel, clearly angered, had to deny that the fiasco might lead to his resignation after the daily newspaper Bild issued an advance release saying he had offered to quit.

"No, good Lord, I don't have the impression that anyone believes I should resign... the validity of the conference itself is not in doubt," he said.

Foreign policy experts say the conference was to be part of Germany's attempts since unification to take a more active diplomatic as well as military role in global affairs.

It was also meant as an attempt to better understand the 2.3 million Muslims now living in Germany.

Mr. Kinkel's failure was rubbed in by the fact that Bonn bookshops ignored his request to fill their window displays with books on Islamic themes for the duration of the conference.

They said that would interfere with pre-Christmas sales.

Al Azhar approves sex-change surgeries

CAIRO (AFP) — Seven years after throwing out a medical student who changed from a man to a woman, Al Azhar, the highest Sunni Islamic authority in Egypt, has permitted transsexuals under some conditions.

"A man can undergo an operation to become a woman and a woman can do the reverse if a doctor deems intervention necessary to bring out signs of femininity or masculinity which are present but hidden," a new fatwa, or religious decision, said.

"Since 1988, around 20 sex-change cases have been registered in Egypt. Most of them involve men who become women," the head of the civil status bureau, Ibrahim Bessila, told AFP.

Sex-change operations are authorised by Egypt's doctors' union "but are done quietly due to the sarcasm they raise from the public, a union source said."

Sayed Abdullah, the first known case in Egypt, ran into more than just sneers. An Azhar University threw him out of his medical school in 1988 after he underwent the operation and emerged Sali Abdullah.

At the time, the university condemned the transsexual as a "disgraceful imitation of a woman forbidden by Islam."

An administrative court la-

ter overturned the university's ruling and ordered Sali placed in Al Azhar's medical school for women.

But Sali had no problem in avoiding military service, required only for men in Egypt. She also succeeded in changing her identity card after a surprised interior ministry committee assigned with reviewing changes in the document called in doctors to testify to the first-ever change in the "sex" category on the card.

Sali also married after working as a belly dancer in a Cairo cabaret where she attracted numerous clients, not to mention the interest of the press in which her photo was everywhere.

But Sali turned down an interview with AFP, saying, "My husband is jealous and has forbidden me to speak to the press. I obey him to preserve our happiness."

The instant press interest revealed transsexuals has apparently given ideas to men looking to get out of their military service and women wanting more than the half-share of inheritances.

"Once a farmer arrived in a niqab (a veil that completely covers the face) and speaking in a feminine voice. He didn't expect to be examined by doctors, who confirmed that he was a man," Bessila said.

Peace process has come afar, but has much more to go

By Donald M. Rothberg
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The clear and heartfelt grief of Yasser Arafat symbolises how far he and Yitzhak Rabin had moved towards peace. The act of a Jewish extremist who cut down Mr. Rabin and the celebrations by Arab opponents of conciliation demonstrate how far the process still must go.

President Bill Clinton attended Monday's funeral for the man he called "my partner and my friend." The president was on the edge of tears when he stood in the Rose Garden and said, "Goodbye, friend."

Former presidents George Bush and Jimmy Carter were also in the large U.S. delegation to the funeral. It was a tribute to the man as well as a signal of U.S. determination to keep the peace process moving forward.

How has Mr. Rabin's murder changed the prospects for peace?

"Peace must be, and peace will be, Prime Minister Rabin's lasting legacy," said

Mr. Clinton.

Americans involved in the peace process over the years expressed hope that the assassination would strengthen Israeli support for reaching agreements with their Arab neighbours.

"This death must be a spur to action, to prevent the opponents of peace from destroying the process," Martin Indyk, U.S. ambassador to Israel, told CBS "Face the Nation" on Sunday.

"I don't think there's any doubt that a majority of Israelis do want peace with the Palestinians," said Mr. Carter.

"I hope that nothing out of this tragic incident of terrorism will set back the process, set back Israel's desire to talk peace," said Mr. Bush. "I don't think it will. It shouldn't."

James A. Baker, who was Mr. Bush's secretary of state, said part of the blame for the killing lies with the "verbal violence" that is so much a part of Israeli politics. "The rhetoric has to be cooled," he told ABC's "This Week with David Brinkley."

Mr. Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), did not attend Mr. Rabin's funeral, a decision Itamar Rabinovich, the Israeli ambassador to the United States, called "a sensible decision. I know that personally he would have liked to come. The situation may be such that emotions run so high... antagonism to him personally still runs high in Israel."

Israel and the PLO have moved steadily, if slowly, towards peace. Negotiations between Israel and Syria are another matter. They remain deadlocked with no movement likely in the near future.

The day before Mr. Rabin was killed, Syria's Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said Israel was not ready to push forward on peace talks with Syria until the spring of 1996.

Syria's state-run media reported Mr. Rabin's assassination but did not immediately comment on it. However, Syrian soldiers stationed in Beirut joined Lebanese in

spontaneous celebration, with some shooting their guns in the air and chanting "Hafez Hafez" a reference to Syrian leader, Hafez Al Assad.

The assassination of Mr. Rabin by an Israeli extremist inevitably recalls the violent death of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who was gunned down in 1981 by extremists opposed to the peace agreement reached by Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Peace survived the death of Sadat. One of the mourners at Mr. Rabin's funeral was Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak.

Today's hope is that the far broader peace initiative now under way will survive the loss of a leader.

Mr. Arafat looked visibly shaken when he expressed the hope that "the Israelis and the Palestinians have the ability to overcome this tragedy against the peace process and the whole situation in the Middle East."

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat were blood enemies through the years that the Israeli

served his country as a military leader and Mr. Arafat worked for Israel's destruction.

They met for the first time at the White House in September 1993 when they signed the peace agreement between Israel and the PLO. With Mr. Clinton looking on, Mr. Arafat held out his hand. Mr. Rabin hesitated, almost recoiled, but then reached out. The world saw their handshake and knew that something significant was happening.

Their handshake did not end the terror — Arabs against Jews, Jews against Arabs.

Yet the talks went on and Mr. Rabin emerged as a staunch defender of his old enemy Mr. Arafat. When the PLO cracked down on extremists, the Israeli prime minister was quick to acknowledge it and to say, "we appreciate the efforts of the Palestinians."

Now the people of Israel are asking themselves why Mr. Rabin fell victim to an act of terror by an Israeli.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	The Flatmates
14:30	New Headlines
15:00	Prisoner of War
15:30	Lucas Show
16:00	Pugwilt's Summer
16:30	Low Lucy
17:00	Tarzan
Children's Programme — Fractals	
17:30	Surprise Surprise
18:00	News in French
19:15	Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30	New Headlines
19:35	Nurses
20:00	Divine the World
20:25	The American Chart Show
21:05	Varieties
21:30	Heartbeat
22:00	News in English
22:25	Feature film: "Ghost"
22:59	Nut Cracker (music show on ice)
PRAYER TIMES	
04:37	Fajr
05:47	Sunrise (Doha)
11:20	Dhuhr
14:17	Asr
18:43	Maghrib
18:02	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church	
Min./Max. temp.	

Amman	617
Aqaba	12/24
Dead Sea	2/18
Jerusalem	11/23
Yesterday's high temperatures:	
Amman	33
Aqaba	37 per cent.
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mubashir Mazharah	820425
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab	758048
Dr. Walid Al Masri	675485
Dr. Yousef Rashid	896301
Piras pharmacy	661912
Al Asma pharmacy	776336
Natroukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	643945
Shimam pharmacy	617641
Natroukh pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Khalil	273099
Alquds pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Abdul Karim Khushushneh	

HOSPITALS	
Al-Hussein Medical Centre	81301332
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	64428116
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	6424112
Mathas, J. Amman	636144
Palestine, Shmoran	607071
Shimam Hospital	669131
Al-Hussein Hospital	645845
The Islamic, Amman	6612737
Al-Ahli, Amman	6641646
Al-Muhajirin, Amman	7710103
Al-Bashir, J. Amman	77511126
Army, Amman	89161115
Queen Alia Hospital	66224959
Amal Hospital	607155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	01983323
Zarqa National Hospital	01983323
Al-Hussein Hospital	01983323
Al-Hussein Modern Hospital	01983323
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	01983323
IBBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	01983323
Green Catholic Hospital	01983323
Dr. Al-Najeh Hospital	01983323
ADABA:	
Princess Hana Hospital	01983323
FOR THE TRAVELLER	

Other Flights (Terminal 2)		Cairo (MS)
10:30	Sana'a (Y)	21:10
12:40	Bahrain (GF)	Amsterdam (KL)
14:00	Doha (Q)	
14:30	Moscow (SU)	
20:10	Beirut (ME)	
20:30	Cairo (MS)	
21:20	Amsterdam (KL)	
21:30	Istanbul (TK)	
21:59	London, Beirut (BA)	
DEPARTURES		
Royal Jordanian (RJ)		
Flights		
(Terminal 1)		
05:30	Aqaba (RJ)	
06:15	Beirut (RJ)	
07:45	Aqaba, Frankfurt (RJ)	
11:15	Rome, Munich (RJ)	
11:25	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	
11:30	Vienna (RJ)	
12:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)	
20:10	Athens (RJ)	
20:25	Cairo (RJ)	
20:35	New Delhi (RJ)	
21:45	Jeddah (RJ)	
05:30	New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)	
21:30	Ahu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)	
21:30	Damascus (RJ)	
21:45	Aqaba (RJ)	
22:05	Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)	
22:40	Bangkok (RJ)	
22:45	Sana'a (RJ)	
Other flights (Terminal 2)		
01:30	Beirut (ME)	
01:35	Sana'a (Y)	
01:40	Doha (GF)	
15:00	Moscow (SU)	
16:05	Moscow (SU)	
MARKET PRICES		
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.		
Apple		700/500
Banana		600
Banana (Mukammal)		620
Chabbage		160/100
Corn		320/200
Cauliflower		170/100
Cucumbers (large)		150/100
Cucumbers (small)		260/250
Eggplant		150/80
Garlic		700/500
Onion		700/500
Grape		210/140
Grape Fruit		220/140
Lemon		200/120
Marrow (large)		100/50
Marrow (small)		200/120
Oil (green)		340/250
Onion (green)		700/500
Onion (dry)		220/180
Orange		250/150
Pepper (hot)		200/120
Pepper (sweet)		180/100
Potato		340/250
Radiol		130/80
String Beans		650/450
Tangerine		230/150



The home where His Majesty King Hussein spent his childhood years in Jabal Amman (Petra photo)

Prince Ghazi inaugurates college training unit for electrical engineers, technical cadres

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — HRH Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammed yesterday inaugurated a unit for the training of electrical engineers and technical cadres highly specialised in electrical power technology and automatic processes at the Amman University College (AUC).

The unit was established through a five-year cooperation project between Italy and Jordan aimed at strengthening the role of the AUC and promoting the sector of generation, transmission and distribution of electrical power.

The project, financed by the Italian Government within the framework of developing countries' assistance programme, cost Italian lire 2.65 billion (around JD 1.2 million), and started in 1990.

New equipment and technological instruments for Italian lire 1.280 billion (around JD 0.6 million) were supplied and five new laboratories were set up at the Department of Electrical Engineering of the AUC: an electrical measurements laboratory and electrical machines laboratory, a systems laboratory, a computers laboratory, and an electrical machines control laboratory.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Minister of Higher Education Rateb Sa'oud, Italian Ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bertini, and President of the AUC Mohammed Alia.

HRH Prince Ghazi visited the new laboratories and conferred awards on Dr. Bertini and other officials of the Italian embassy as well as on the Italian experts in charge of the project.

Stressing on the value of this project to provide a valid instrument for industrial process control of Jordan's developing industry, Massimo Maciocia, senior teacher training expert at Cotecno, the Italian company that carried out the project, said "the intervention was studied very carefully, so that the achievements could be coherent with Jordan's industrial realities, can have concrete application and serve real purposes."

Maurizio De Lucia, project manager at Cotecno, pointed out that the successful implementation of the project was also due to the spirit of collaboration and the enthusiasm showed both by the Jordanian and Italian sides.

"The potential of the programmes and technological structures that were established is immense," Mr. Maciocia said, "and it's up to the enthusiasm of the ones who will come after to make the best out of it."

Apart from the starting and set up of the five new laboratories, the programme included technical assistance and experts' missions, introduction of new educational material and updating of the educational programmes.

In the framework of this project also, three scholarships for training in Italian universities were awarded to AUC teachers.

Scientists probe control of endemic diseases

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan said Saturday that poverty was the root cause of many problems endangering the world today because it deprives a great number of people of the ability to purchase medicines and acquire pure drinking water to protect their health.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Minister of Health Aref Bataineh at a seminar on "community health - environmental protection and control," Prince Hassan noted that poverty has caused many common diseases to reappear, such as tuberculosis, zoonosis and other life-threatening diseases like AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

The Prince urged the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) to give additional attention to the medical profession and its ethics, monitoring and supervising medical practices and urged the association to be attentive to the importance of continued education for doctors and medical research work.

He said that the JMA is also called on to open new scopes of cooperation with sister Arab medical associations because such efforts would help eliminate many endemic diseases.

Seminar Chairman Oumeish Oumeish told the opening session that the convening of the three-day seminar, which is attended by representatives from 10 Arab states and seven foreign countries, was aimed to help scientists and researchers discuss leishmaniasis and endemic zoonosis and the impact of development on their spread and control measures.

The gathering has been organised by the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST), the Ministry of Health and the University of Jordan in addition to the International Development Research Centre in Canada.

Visiting Japanese team reviews aid to Jordan, explores potential development areas

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Saturday voiced Jordan's appreciation to Japan for its continued assistance to the Kingdom in helping it to carry out development projects especially in building up its national information network.

Speaking at the Royal Court with a visiting team representing the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and led by JICA Director Kimo Fujita, the Crown Prince said Jordan was grateful to Japan for its continued economic assistance and its role in helping to enhance Middle East peace through its chairmanship of the working group on the environment in the multilateral phase of the peace process.

Prince Hassan called for Jordanian-Japanese dialogue to open the way for cooperation between the Middle East countries and those in the Far East.

The JICA director presented to the Crown Prince an outline of the agency's activities in the Kingdom over the past years stressing that JICA will pursue its backing for the Kingdom's development efforts.

The delegation met earlier with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf and reviewed JICA's development aid programmes to Jordan and ways to increase JICA's activities in the Kingdom.

The JICA team is in Amman earlier Saturday to follow up on matters related to the agency's aid to Jordan's industrial endeavours in the southern governorates of the Kingdom.

During their five-day visit to Jordan the team will meet other Jordanian officials and tour the Sahab Industrial City near Amman as well as the Free Trade Zone in Zarqa and sites of future industrial zones in southern Jordan.

A Ministry of Planning statement said that JICA established a permanent office in Amman in 1991 with the purpose of supervising the implementation of JICA-financed projects in the Kingdom. The office has also been implementing programmes involving Japanese volunteers and experts' contributions to Jordanian development schemes and organising training courses for Jordanian personnel.

Lately, the statement said, JICA has financed the procurement of medical equipment for the Ministry of Health and equipment used for maintenance for the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and for the Greater Amman Municipality's workshops and machines.

At the meeting with Dr. Khalaf, the JICA delegation reviewed the progress of a project to increase food production.



JICA Director Kimo Fujita (right) with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf (left) during their meeting in Amman.

'Growth indicators spell need for national population strategy'

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The initial results of Jordan's 1994 census released late last year showed that the Kingdom's population nearly doubled since the last census in 1979.

Today, Jordan's population numbers 4,095 million, with an annual population growth rate of 4.35 per cent, one of the highest in the world, according to the National Population Commission (NPC).

By the year 2000, the population will number 4.8 million, and by the year 2005, some 5.6 million, the NPC said.

Although the government has in past years supported birth spacing projects to stabilise the population growth and improve mother/child healthcare, it has yet to adopt a national population strategy, which, says Abdel Rahim Maaytah, a researcher for the NPC, is essential for Jordan.

The NPC, which approved a national population strategy among its own ranks, submitted a national strategy for population to the Cabinet late last month, which the commission says should be considered in parallel with economic and environmental development strategies.

Prospects for economic prosperity seem bright, with the rate of unemployment set to drop, and Jordan's dire water situation, especially in densely populated areas, will be somewhat alleviated by peace with Israel.

Yet, the facts remain that Jordan's population is a young one — 42.5 per cent of the population is 14 years of age or younger — and fertility (the number of live births per woman) stands at approximately 5.6, characteristics that are sure to produce a strain on the economy, social services and Jordan's limited natural resources.

Without a coherent strategy, says Mr. Maaytah, the sustainable development that Jordan is working to attain, will be difficult.

"What good is development planning without population planning? If you restore water to today's population, it doesn't mean there will be enough for the next generation and those to follow."

Jordan today is close to semi-advanced countries in terms of infant mortality, but in terms of fertility, is on a par with developing countries.

According to the population commission, the trend in fertility is going down: it now stands at 5.6 compared to 6.6 during the last decade, and 8 during the 1970s.

However, said Mr. Maaytah, it is still a far cry from the fertility rate in industrialised countries, which is estimated at 1.8. He attributes this to the success among health institutions in educating families about birth spacing. "People are learning to space their children, which is not only good for the health of the mother and child, but helps stabilise the population."

Mr. Maaytah said that final results of Jordan's 1994 census (due to be released before the end of the year) may show that number to be as low as five, a positive sign, he says, but does not offset the fact that Jordan's population increased by 300,000 during the 1990 Gulf crisis.

"Our emphasis should be on reducing the fertility rate, with an emphasis on family planning, but the issue in Jordan is quite complex," he said citing the geographical distribution of population, the waves of refugees absorbed during the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, Jordanian returnees during the Gulf crisis and the lack of natural resources combined with the distribution of natural resources.

As for family planning, a 1990 survey showed that 35 per cent of Jordanian women practiced family planning.

Mr. Maaytah expects the figure to be 46 per cent in 1995 and 50 per cent by the year 2000, which is far for a developing country.

The structure of a developing country's population rests on several factors, he said, primarily the education of women, women's occupation and the traditions and religion of the society in question.

The education of women in Jordan has averted what could have been a more serious population problem, he said.

"Owing to Jordan's push since the 1960s to educate and employ women has meant that women do not get married as young as they used to," he said. "The average age of marriage for women used to be around 16, but today, it is 23-24 years old. This means that women aren't having children as early as they used to."

But, he added, the role of women in development has been somewhat limited.

According to the NPC, women's role in economic activities is still low — 13 per cent participation rate for females age 15 and over. If women were more involved, he said, the fertility rate would probably be considerably lower.

Beyond the issue of women, Mr. Maaytah said, Jordan needs to rationalise the population distribution geographically.

"We need economic projects that attract the population out of our most populated areas," he said, "and that would also keep people from migrating from country to city. Jordan today is a 78 per cent urban society with 40 per cent of people living in Amman governorate."

The strategy also is calling for a broader approach to educating society about the need for population and family planning. "We need more concentration on population education in the school curriculum," Mr. Maaytah said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT
* Classical music by Somer Group at Darat Al Funun at 7:00pm.

SEMINAR
* Marking His Majesty King Hussein's 60th Birthday: Achievements & Challenges, with the participation of Dr. Taysir Abdul Jabir and Mr. Abdul Hadi Majali at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00pm.

LECTURE
* "Germany and the Emergence of a New Middle East," in Arabic, by Dr. Mohammad Abu Hantash at Goethe Institut at 6:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL
* Recital of poems penned by poets of the 1990s at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00p.m.

EXHIBITIONS
* "Jerusalem" display of works by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery.

* Works by Iraqi Artist Ismail Fattah at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh

* Works by Akram Abdel Jaber at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman.

* Works by Dodi Taba'a entitled "Variations Graphiques 93-95" at the French Cultural Centre.

* Metal works by Ammar Khammash at Liwan, off Wadi Sagra Street. Also displaying all kinds of handicrafts. (Tel 699141)

* Works by Nazih Abu Afesh at Balka Art Gallery, Fuheis.

* A retrospective of works by Mona Saudi at Darat Al Funun.

Akram Abdel Jaber pays homage to life and its beauty

By Ica Wabbab
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Amman — Instituto Cervantes is hosting a painting exhibition of Jordanian artist Akram Abdel Jaber. A graduate of the Institute of Fine Arts and Music in Jordan and a member of the Jordanian Artists Association, the artist is an avowed classical music fan and also a businessman "to make a living."

On a crisp end of autumn day, with Tchaikovsky playing in the background, Mr. Abdel Jaber's exhibition casts an optimistic view of life with a heart-warming profusion of colours.

The oil and pastel paintings, (two crayons of Petra make the exception where the medium is concerned) depict Jordanian landscapes in spring and summer, with clear skies and flowers in full bloom, with clear water meandering through lush grass or dark pink oleanders.

Old ruins are overgrown with vegetation in most of the paintings; stones are strewn among growth of varied colouring or carefully, geometrically built in walls of ancient castles or aged houses.

Arched doorways and flower pots on the window sill, "just like our old house," suggest human presence and history as the immensity of the desert and the pervading vegetation suggest infinity of time and life.

Majestic irises take centre piece in a frame, with the dark indigo/violet of the petals striking over the dark green leaves.

An imposing tree overshadows the whole canvas, trying to get out of the restraining frame, shading it and suggesting delicious coolness on a hot summer day.

Moss-tinged ruin stones and slabs bleached by centuries of sun, shade and light contrast to give an air of mystery and to bring life to the landscape otherwise devoid of human presence.

The artist manages to magnificently render the desert in Wadi Araba and the deserted Wadi Rum. The colours suggest a calm sunset; purple-tinged ochre or greenish beige desert dunes host bushes of desert plants, solitary in the vastness surrounding them and proof of life prevailing stronger than the arid environment and sterile rocks of the wasteland.

Palm trees, olive groves, poplars and oaks fill places as familiar as Salt, Karak, Shobak, Umri Qais, Jerash, Azraq and Amman.

Details are meticulously observed. Even wide-sweep swaths of colour are not done in one stroke of brush but with myriads of touches faithfully reproducing nature.

Life is either vaguely hinted at in one earlier painting or is strongly felt in two canvases each portraying a woman. Serenely seated among colourful flowers or pensively holding a bouquet of flowers on an anil blue background, the women are as suggestive of life and fertility as all the artist's paintings are. It is an effusive homage to life and its beauty that Akram Abdel Jaber offers in his exhibition that opened on Nov.8 and will show until Nov. 18.



Landscape by Akram Abdel Jaber

Azraq and Amman. Details are meticulously observed. Even wide-sweep swaths of colour are not done in one stroke of brush but with myriads of touches faithfully reproducing nature.

Life is either vaguely hinted at in one earlier painting or is strongly felt in two canvases each portraying a woman. Serenely seated among colourful flowers or pensively holding a bouquet of flowers on an anil blue background, the women are as suggestive of life and fertility as all the artist's paintings are. It is an effusive homage to life and its beauty that Akram Abdel Jaber offers in his exhibition that opened on Nov.8 and will show until Nov. 18.

Nigerians stunned by executions

LAGOS (R) — Many Nigerians were shocked Saturday to read newspaper headlines of the execution of minority rights campaigner Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight associates.

Radio and television have not reported the executions yet but independent newspapers broke the news with headlines like "Ken Saro-Wiwa hanged" and "Saro-Wiwa, eight others hanged". "This is unbelievable," said nurse Bola Laditan as she scanned the headlines from a newspaper vendor. "I never thought they would go ahead with it," she added.

"May their souls rest in peace," said street trader Chukwuma Nwafor in central Lagos.

Saro-Wiwa and his kinsmen, who had campaigned for the rights of the Ogoni people in Nigeria's oil-rich south, were hanged for murder Friday despite international calls for clemency.

"Two wrongs don't make a right," commented taxi driver Festus Shadipe as dozens of people surveyed newspaper headlines along broad street in central Lagos.

Reporters in the oil city of Port Harcourt, where the executions took place, said troops and riot police backed by tanks were deployed at strategic sites and it was calm.

The *Guardian* newspaper said Saro-Wiwa's wife, Hauwa, weeping at their home in Port Harcourt Friday, confirmed the death of her husband but pleaded she was in no mood to talk.

Africa's most populous nation has reeled from crisis to crisis since 1993 when the army annulled a presidential election to end a long period of military rule.

Military ruler General Sani Abacha has promised a

return to civilian rule but his government has also arrested opposition leaders and cracked down on crime with televised executions.

Western critics of his government were relieved last month when Gen. Abacha, an infantry officer, bowed to local and foreign pressure and commuted the sentences of more than 40 alleged coup plotters, including former ruler Olusegun Obasanjo.

But Gen. Abacha's announcement of a three-year transition period to civil rule was criticised as taking too long.

Last week, a tribunal sentenced Saro-Wiwa and the eight members of his Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP) to hang for the murder last year of pro-government Ogoni chiefs.

The defendants' lawyers resigned before the verdict saying the trial was unfair and critics of Nigeria's government said Saro-Wiwa and his associates were being punished for daring to threaten Nigeria's oil industry, its economic lifeblood.

Saro-Wiwa, 54, had led a campaign for self-determination for the 500,000 Ogoni minority and to protect the environment in their homeland, which has been exploited by foreign oil companies since 1954.

A recipient of Austria's top human rights award, the Bruno Kreisky Prize, he was recently nominated for the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, according to a statement in Lagos Friday by Nordic countries.

Western nations have reacted angrily to the executions with the United States announcing an arms embargo against Nigeria and other governments, including Washington, recalled ambassadors.

Envoys recalled

President Bill Clinton recalled the U.S. ambassador and threatened U.N. action against Nigeria as its hanging of nine minority rights activists sparked global fury.

Britain, Germany, Austria and South Africa joined the United States in recalling their diplomatic representatives from Nigeria.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Mr. Clinton had told the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, to begin consultations immediately on appropriate U.N. measures "to condemn these actions" by Nigeria's military government.

Mr. Clinton also ordered a halt to military sales to Nigeria and extended a ban on issuing U.S. visas to Nigerian government officials and military officers.

Nigeria, a major oil producer, hit back at criticism during angry exchanges in the U.N. Security Council, accusing other countries of meddling in its affairs.

"We regard it as gross interference in our internal affairs," said Nigeria's deputy representative, Isaac Ayewah.

British Ambassador Sir John Weston, reading a Reuters report, announced news of the executions at a formal Security Council debate on Liberia.

The United States, Italy, Germany and France departed from scripted speeches to deplore the action.

A White House official said an oil embargo was not under consideration but Mrs. Albright might seek support for measures "which could affect their oil industry". He indicated this could include restricting oil

equipment exports to Nigeria.

Italy's Ambassador Francesco Paolo Fulci greeted the news from Nigeria with "shock and horror" and said: "You can hang people but you can never hang ideas and ideals."

British Prime Minister John Major said the executions flew in the face of the Commonwealth's 1991 Harare Declaration on democracy and human rights.

"I do not think that is acceptable, I see no way in which it can be defended and, if the Harare principles mean anything, I do not myself see how Nigeria can stay in the Commonwealth until they return to democratic government," he told reporters.

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe said Africa was "full of disgust" at the hangings and Nigeria's military government appeared bent on self-destruction.

"It is not only horrifying, but an act of disrespect for all of us who are trying to assist Nigeria to come out of the difficult situation in which it finds itself," he said.

In Brussels, the European Union condemned the executions and said the 15-nation bloc would re-examine relations with Nigeria.

South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, said he was devastated.

"This Nigerian military dictatorship should know that the world does care about such gross violations and the first action against them should be that they must be kicked out of the Commonwealth," he told Reuters.



Nigerian Foreign Minister Tomi Ikimi avoids waiting reporters and their questions regarding the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa, as he leaves his hotel in Auckland (AFP photo)

Commonwealth suspends Nigeria over hanging; threatens expulsion

QUEENSTOWN, New Zealand (R) — The Commonwealth suspended Nigeria Saturday as punishment for hanging nine minority rights activists and threatened its military rulers with outright expulsion unless they restored democracy.

The penalty was unprecedented in the history of the Commonwealth, a 52-strong club grouping Britain and its former colonies, and reflected deep revulsion over Nigeria's human rights record over a number of years, ministers said.

Only Gambia, itself under military rule, dissented from the decision, which came just a day after Nigeria ignored international appeals for clemency and hanged writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight associates. The Solomon Islands, which also dissented initially, later fell into line.

Not even South Africa under its former apartheid regime was booted out of the Commonwealth — it walked out without waiting to be ejected in 1961.

British officials said Nelson Mandela, president of newly democratic South Africa, was a driving force behind the decision to get tough with Nigeria.

They said Mr. Mandela recommended suspension after winning support for

the move at a caucus of African states.

He galvanised the summit by recalling how much strength he drew during his years as a political prisoner from the knowledge that the outside world was pressing South Africa to introduce democracy.

British Prime Minister John Major also spoke strongly in favour of suspension, as did Australia's Paul Keating, who argued that the Commonwealth's future influence and status depended on its taking firm action.

The Commonwealth leaders, holding their biennial summit at an idyllic mountain resort on New Zealand's South Island, bluntly told General Sani Abacha to take immediate steps to adhere to the club's principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance agreed in Harare in 1991.

They specifically called for the release of 43 alleged coup plotters, including former head of state Olusegun Obasanjo, as well as the release of the presumed winner of Nigeria's annulled 1993 election, chief Moshod Abiola.

"They further decided that if no demonstrable progress was made towards the fulfilment of these conditions within a time frame to be

stipulated, Nigeria would be expelled from the association," according to a statement read out by summit host Jim Bolger, the prime minister of New Zealand.

The deadline for Nigeria to comply has not yet been agreed, but British officials said Mr. Abacha's promise to restore democracy within three years was not good enough.

Mr. Bolger said the expulsion was not agreed lightly. "A number of Commonwealth leaders have over many, many weeks sought through quiet diplomacy to persuade the government of General Abacha to come into compliance with the principles articulated in the Harare Declaration," Mr. Bolger told reporters.

"This is something that senior Commonwealth leaders, some of them from Africa and some of them from elsewhere, have been exercised about and concerned about for some time," he said.

Although the summit did not consider collective sanctions, British officials said they would be discussed at the United Nations and by the European Union.

"There are some shots in our locker which we think could very well be deployed," a senior British official said.

U.K. crown jewels security to be privatised

LONDON (AFP) — The crown jewels in the Tower of London are to be guarded by a private security firm from next July, and Prime Minister John Major's safety will also be entrusted to private hands, the *Guardian* reported. The paper said a leaked cabinet document also revealed plans to privatise security at the Foreign Office, the Treasury and at magistrates courts. The disclosure comes days after Downing Street security was embarrassed by a reporter gaining access to Mr. Major's office without a pass. A few months ago the government's security facilities executive beat off private competition to hold on to the contracts for both the crown jewels and Downing Street. But the leaked letter reveals that Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine has insisted that the services be privatised by July 1996. The famous "Beefeaters," retired soldiers dressed in blue or red Tudor uniforms, complete with halberd battle-axe, who have kept watch over the crown jewels at the Tower of London for nearly 700 years, are not expected to leave their post.

snakes, scorpions kill 100,000 each year — WHO

GENEVA (AFP) — Snakes, scorpions and other poisonous creepy-crawlies kill more than 100,000 people each year worldwide, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said. Around five million are bitten or stung by venomous creatures annually but the greatest proportion of the deaths occur in developing countries, where many of the victims are farm-workers, who said in its latest weekly bulletin on epidemics. In Asia alone, snakes kill 30,000 people a year, compared to 1,000 in Africa and South America. In wealthy countries, on the other hand, bites are rarely deadly. Some 45,000 people suffer snake-bites in the United States each year but only nine to 15 are killed in consequence. An average two of the 300 to 500 people bitten by snakes die each year in Australia. In Mexico, 300 of the 63,000 people bitten by snakes and scorpions die while around one per cent of Brazil's 8,000 scorpion bites prove deadly as do 1.5 per cent of the country's 20,000 snake-bites.

No supernatural force in China's 'Bermuda triangle'

BEIJING (AFP) — The mystery of China's "Bermuda triangle," which has swallowed 100 people since the 1950s, has no connections with the supernatural, a recent scientific survey has found. A team of geologists, biologists and anthropologists who spent the past month studying the "most mysterious parts" of black bamboo ravine in the southwestern province of Sichuan found nothing abnormal. The Xinhua News Agency said Wednesday. "We have found no signs indicating that there is a supernatural force," said the head of the team, Yang Yong. Since the 1950s, around 100 people have been reported missing in the area, with rescuers unable to recover any bodies — leading to the labelling of the ravine as the "Bermuda triangle" of China. In 1950, a private plane piloted by an American banker crashed in the ravine for an unknown reason, while 12 years later, five Chinese geologists and one of their two guides vanished after penetrating its stone gate pass. "The geological structure is very complex and the climate is quite changeable. Those people might have died of hunger or hypothermia because of insufficient preparation," Mr. Yang said.

Troops on alert in Kashmir as panel scraps poll

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Troops were put on high alert here Saturday after India's Election Commission rejected the federal government's plans to hold elections next month in strife-torn Kashmir.

Troops patrolled markets and business districts to thwart attacks by Muslim separatists, who hailed the panel's verdict as a "victory" for Kashmiris opposed to the elections.

Hawkers were sent packing from the streets by soldiers who moved in convoys of trucks in Srinagar, the hub of a raging Muslim secessionist campaign which has left more than 12,000 people dead in Kashmir since 1989.

"We were expecting a rise in violence," said Kashmir police Chief Mahinder Sabharwal, of fears that jubilant Muslim militants would intensify attacks following the election commission's verdict late Friday.

Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan rejected the proposal of Prime Minister P.V.

Narasimha Rao's cabinet, saying the situation in Kashmir was "not consistent with the conduct of a fair and free elections."

Residents said they "heaved a sigh of relief" following the panel's word as they were fearing an outbreak of violence if New Delhi's plans to conduct elections here by mid-December had been endorsed.

"I had decided to stay out of Kashmir in case polls were held," said Farook Bakshi, a businessman. "There would be a spurt of violence if elections are ordered in the Kashmir Valley."

Several Muslim guerrilla leaders said the panel's verdict bailed out the Indian government, adding it could never have conducted polls in Kashmir.

Other Kashmiri politicians welcomed the decision.

"We are very happy over the decision of the commission as things are bad here and elections would not have been free or fair," said Farooq Abdullah, president

of National Conference Party, Kashmir's oldest political entity.

The Conference Thursday said it would not take part in the polls as long as violence continued, dealing a blow to its ally in Kashmir, the Congress (I) Party of Prime Minister Rao.

The Conference came to power with Congress backing after the last elections were held in Kashmir in 1987 which Muslim political and rebel groups say was rigged.

Mr. Rao's cabinet last Saturday voted for legislative elections in Kashmir by mid-December and forwarded the recommendation to Mr. Seshan's panel, the only forum empowered to take a decision on polls.

Mr. Seshan said he would wait for "the creation of conditions appropriate to the holding of fair and free elections" in Kashmir, under direct federal rule since Jan. 19, 1990.

Mr. Seshan rejected allegations that he had turned down elections under pressure from the Congress because the National

Conference bowed out from elections.

"The government did its duty (by suggesting polls), and we did ours," Mr. Seshan said. "Ours is a good decision."

Muslim militant and political parties in Kashmir had said they would boycott the elections, despite Mr. Rao's assurance of greater autonomy to the Himalayan state bordering Pakistan.

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference, grouping 30 Muslim separatist and political parties, which also opposed balloting, said Mr. Seshan's decision was a slap to India's image abroad.

"India will continue facing humiliation in the international front," said Hurriyat leader Maulvi Abbas Ansari Saturday.

Kashmiris have voted seven times to elect provincial governments since 1962, with voters' turnout at polling stations reaching as high as 75 per cent in 1987.

Indian opposition presses attack on government

BOMBAY (R) — India's main opposition party, staging a massive pre-election political convention, pressed home its attack on Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's ruling Congress Party Saturday, saying it had failed on all fronts.

"Never in the history of independent India (has) its respect plummeted so low and its voice (been) ignored without consideration as during the past five years," a resolution at the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) convention said.

"Today its sovereignty can be questioned without hesitation and security can be threatened without trepidation."

Organisers said more than 130,000 delegates had arrived for the three-day convention at a race-course in India's commercial capital. The BJP plans the meeting as a springboard for its assault on power in gen-

eral elections due by next June.

The failures of this last Congress regime are truly breathtaking. Its record of crime and corruption, its neglect of national interest and its subservience to foreign interest constitute a new low in political immorality," the resolution, proposed by former BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi, said.

The Congress Party has ruled India for all but four years since independence from Britain in 1947.

BJP President Lal Krishna Advani says the coming election campaign should be a stock-taking on nearly 50 years of Congress rule. He says the party has failed in its promise at independence to try to end poverty, ignorance and disease.

The BJP is basing its campaign on promises to clean up politics and to introduce "swadeshi", a

nationalist approach to economics that favours Indian producers and products over foreign ones and encourages the country's dominant agricultural sector.

"It is time for the Congress Party to take a rest. Here in Bombay we make a call for the Congress to go into permanent rest," BJP General Secretary Venkiah Naidu told thousands of delegates gathered under a huge open tent erected on the racecourse.

The BJP resolution attacked Congress over its handling of Kashmir, saying it "has bungled the Kashmir issue from day one."

The BJP convention Saturday heard a call to put Kashmir — now under the federal government's administration — under military rule, and the party resolution said Mr. Rao had "encouraged extremists to internationalise the issue."

"If Pakistan is incomplete without Kashmir," Naidu said in an attack on the involvement of India's neighbour and arch-foe in the disputed territory, "India is incomplete without Pakistan — this is the answer the BJP gives today."

The party renewed its attack on what it sees as the corruption within the ruling party.

"The government has much to hide and is not interested in exposing or punishing either political criminals or criminal politicians," the resolution said.

It also hit out again at what it called the government's shameful subservience to foreign interests.

"Not content with letting foreign banks milk the economy, it is preparing to let foreign insurance companies come and do the same," it said.

N.Korea names Israel a terrorist nation

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea Saturday seized upon the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish extremist a week ago to brand Israel as a "terrorism-fostering country."

A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the murder "shows once again in which country terrorism is occurring."

"Terrorist acts are common phenomena in the United States and its satellite nations which label other countries as terrorist states," he was quoted as saying by the official Korean Central News

Agency (KCNA) monitored here.

"The assassination of the Israeli prime minister is an unavoidable thing in such a terrorism-fostering country as Israel," the spokesman added. "The DPRK (North Korea), a dignified member nation of the United Nations, maintains its consistent stand of opposing all types of terrorism and assistance to it."

The United States has in the past repeatedly accused North Korea as well as Cuba, Iran, Libya and other countries of serving as terrorist havens. North Korea has been

widely seen as responsible for such terrorist acts as the 1983 attack on a South Korean presidential delegation in Rangoon and the 1987 bombing of a South Korean airliner off Burma.

In 1993, Israel briefly contacted North Korea in an effort to halt suspected Scud missile sales in the middle east by the cash-strapped headline Communist state.

During his visit to Tokyo last year, Mr. Rabin warned against North Korea's transfer of nuclear and missile technology to Middle East countries.

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A policeman stands guard behind a sandbags near a government building in the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo. Security has been tightened in Colombo amidst fears of reprisals by Tamil rebels following the resumption of the military offensive against Jaffna (AFP photo)

Khasbulatov: Chechnya peace needs Yeltsin backing

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin should kick-start a new peace process in the rebel Chechnya region by ruling out the use of force, leading Chechen politician Ruslan Khasbulatov said.

Mr. Khasbulatov, former speaker of the disbanded Russian parliament that revolted against Mr. Yeltsin in 1993, said all the prerequisites for fresh peace talks existed.

"There is a real chance to end the conflict by peaceful means," he told reporters at a meeting organised by Interfax News Agency.

"Why does the president not make a declaration stating his desire to resolve this conflict purely by political means? A similar declaration could then be signed by the rival sides."

Mr. Yeltsin, recovering in hospital from a mild heart attack, met Defence Minister Pavel Grachev Friday and called for priority to be given to a peaceful settlement in Chechnya.

Gen. Grachev has been critical of peace efforts so far, saying they have been used by rebels to regroup

and fresh fighting is inevitable.

"The president referred to the priority need to settle this conflict by peaceful means," ITAR-TASS news agency said.

"But at the same time he made clear that all the shooting against our troops should not go unnoticed," it said.

Mr. Yeltsin, who has described Chechnya as "the biggest disappointment of my entire presidency", ordered thousands of troops into the southern region almost a year ago to crush separatists loyal to Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Russia's Interior Ministry estimates about 26,000 people have been killed in the fighting, including some 2,000 Russian servicemen.

Mr. Khasbulatov, who enjoys significant popular support in his native Chechnya, has been holding talks with rival factions in the region, including representatives of Mr. Dudayev who is now leading resistance from a mountain hide-out.

A loose ceasefire has been in place since June, but the

casualty toll has been creeping higher almost every day in a situation described as "neither war nor peace".

A military agreement, reached on July 31, called on both sides to refrain from use of force. But the accord has been derailed by a bomb attack in October that almost killed top Russian military commander Colonel-General Anatoly Romanov.

The agreement also envisaged rebel disarmament, partial Russian troop withdrawals and prisoner swaps.

Mr. Khasbulatov, a bitter foe of Mr. Yeltsin, suggested Mr. Dudayev, wanted by Russian authorities, be brought into new negotiations.

"It is possible to end the criminal investigation into Mr. Dudayev. He has hardly committed more crimes than those who introduced troops into Chechnya," he said.

Mr. Khasbulatov said the various parties in the conflict should grab the bull by the horns and agree on the touchy issue of Chechnya's status. Moscow insists it must stay

within the Russian Federation, albeit with substantial sovereignty.

He said talks on the general principles of an agreement between Russia and Chechnya could be held in Moscow.

A peace settlement could be based on agreements that would set four restrictions on Chechen independence, he said. These were recognition of common citizenship, open frontiers, a single monetary system and no army, he added.

Meanwhile rebel Chechen forces have stepped up attacks on federal forces, using mortars and heavy weapons, the Russian military said Friday.

Russian troops came under fire 40 times during the past 24 hours, more than twice as many as the day before, the Interfax News Agency quoted the Russian military as saying. Seven Russians were wounded.

Russian army positions have come under heavy fire for the past three days around Bamut, a village about 35 kilometres southwest of Grozny, the agency reported.

Suicide bombers attack Sri Lankan capital; 15 dead

COLOMBO (R) — Two Tamil Tiger suicide bombers blew themselves up in the heart of Colombo's tourist district Saturday, killing 15 people, while the Sri Lankan military reported heavy rebel casualties in its northern offensive.

Military intelligence sources said one of the bombers penetrated army headquarters while the second blew himself up 300 metres away at the capital's Slave Island Railway Station.

His body was blown 50 metres and landed on the railway track, one witness said.

"There's just confusion here with everyone screaming and shouting. There are limbs and body parts spread over 50 yards. It is impossible to tell the dead from the wounded," a witness said minutes after the blast.

The intelligence sources said the second bomb killed 15 civilians and altogether 59 people had been taken to hospital. Hospital sources said some of the wounded were severely maimed.

The bomber who penetrated army HQ was undergoing an identity check at the entrance when he suddenly burst 10 metres into the complex and detonated plastic explosives strapped to his waist, the military said.

The intelligence sources, who said two soldiers were wounded, added that both bombers were members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who are fighting for a homeland in the north and east of the country.

The military said more than 230 Tamil Tiger rebels and government troops died in fierce battles that raged near the gates of Jaffna City Friday, when the armed forces resumed their advance across the island's north after a two-week lull.

A total of 188 of the dead were from the LTTE and 45 soldiers also died, the military statement said, adding that 300 rebels and 100 soldiers were wounded.

The army, which first launched its offensive against the rebels on Oct. 17, was advancing on

strategic points near Jaffna City, which is at the heart of a homeland the LTTE want to establish.

Most of the town's civilian residents have fled, joining between 100,000 and 500,000 refugees camped at Chavakachcheri, east of Jaffna City, and south across the Jaffna Lagoon in and around Kilinochchi in the mainland.

Reporting on the suicide bombings in Colombo, the Sri Lankan News Agency quoted senior military sources as saying that the second bomber "ran into a crowd of civilians who were witnessing the incident" and blew himself up.

Security forces cordoned off the luxury Taj Samudra Hotel next to the army HQ after reports of gunfire and searched the arc-shaped, 400-roomed building floor by floor, the intelligence sources said.

One guest said she saw a man lying in the sixth floor corridor "with what looked like bullet wounds". He was believed to be a hotel employee.

Within a kilometre radius

of army HQ lie the president's home temple, trees, the Ministry of Industries, the U.S. embassy, as well as top tourist hotels.

The LTTE have hit targets in Sri Lanka's capital, in the southwest, since the army's northern offensive.

On Oct. 20, they blew up two key oil installations in Colombo, sending towering flames into the night sky. More than 20 people were killed, including at least one suicide bomber.

A few weeks earlier, a suicide bomber blew up 24 people in the fashionable Embassy District of the town, an explosion which police said was originally targeted at a passing motorcade.

A shadowy group called Ellalan Force, believed to be a front for the LTTE, has threatened tourist targets and last year detonated minor bombs in two hotels. A bomb at the airport earlier this year failed to explode.

More than 50,000 people have been killed in the war which has raged since 1983.

1 killed by bomb blast during Bangladesh strike

DHAKA (R) — A bomb killed a man and 50 people were injured in clashes between police and opposition activists enforcing a day-long strike across Bangladesh on Saturday, witnesses said.

The strike virtually paralysed all major cities, including the port of Chittagong, and largely disrupted life in rural areas, they said.

The stoppage was the latest in a series of opposition-organised strikes and transport blockades to force Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to step down and allow elections under a non-partisan caretaker administration.

Mrs. Khaleda has rejected the demands for and so far, Bombs were hurled in several protests, killing one person. Police said they found a tattered identity card indicating the victim, whose body was torn apart, was a college student.

Eusaul Huq Shamim, chief of the Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of the main opposition group Awami League, was among dozens injured when police used batons to break up pickets near Dhaka's main government secretariat.

Witnesses said police attacked stick-carrying activists at several other areas in the capital city of nine million.

Opposition parties, including the Awami League, also urged Bangladeshis to observe half-day strikes across the country over the next five days.

Nearly 5,000 police and paramilitary troops were deployed in the Dhaka to protect public property.

Witnesses said there was no transport on the streets except for a few rickshaws. Shops were closed and trains and river ferries were at a standstill. Domestic flights were mostly cancelled.

In Chittagong, protesters damaged nearly 40 rickshaws and hurled homemade bombs at police. No injuries were reported, local officials said.

All port activities remained suspended. The Stock Exchanges in Dhaka and Chittagong were closed.



Spanish businessman Javier De La Rosa speaks during an interview with Spanish agency EFE about his presumed attempt to blackmail King Juan Carlos to get his assistance in judicial cases against him (AFP photo)

King dragged into Spain's crisis

MADRID (R) — King Juan Carlos was dragged into the maelstrom of Spain's political crisis when authorities decided to investigate reports that two disgraced financiers had tried to blackmail the monarch.

The ruling Socialist Party of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, himself wounded by corruption scandals and a 1980s secret war on ETA rebels, immediately appealed to all parties to keep the king — the ultimate guarantor of Spain's 20-year-old democracy — out of the political battle-ground.

King Juan Carlos was sucked into the turbulence when the daily Diario 16 said Friday a former Kuwaiti representative in Spain and another fallen financier, using as leverage earlier favours to the palace, had tried to pressure the king into helping to get fraud charges against them dropped.

The Justice Ministry asked the chief prosecutor to begin a criminal investigation right away. The palace declined comment.

The king has no constitutional or legal powers to intervene in court cases, but a close friend who managed his personal matters until 1992 confirmed Friday he had been approached to help annul fraud charges against Javier De La Rosa, former Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) representative in Spain, and Mario Conde,

a once-eminent banker now fallen from grace.

Mr. De La Rosa denied Diario 16's blackmail charge but said he had paid 12 billion pesetas (\$100 million) into Swiss accounts at the request of Manuel Prado Y Colon De Carvajal, a friend of the king, so that he could repay a 10-year-old loan used to help "some very important people".

Mr. Prado Y Colon denied in a radio interview having ever received any money but said: "I began to receive subliminal messages through third parties suggesting I take steps to have lawsuits in London and Madrid withdrawn."

Mr. Conde, sacked by regulators from his Banco Espanol De Credito (Banesto) two years ago after running up a balance-sheet shortfall of 605 billion pesetas (\$4.6 billion), has already been accused by Mr. Gonzalez of being at the centre of a conspiracy involving stolen secret military files.

According to opposition parties, the files, some already leaked and printed in the local press, prove that Mr. Gonzalez's 13-year-old government engineered a campaign of violence against Basque ETA separatists in the 1980s. Mr. Gonzalez has denied he authorised the "dirty war."

Mr. Conde denied Friday any attempts at royal blackmail and said: "It is flatly,

totally and absolutely false that I had anything to do, directly or indirectly, with that alleged blackmail (of the king)."

The Socialist Party accused Mr. Conde and Mr. De La Rosa of trying to "bring the state to its knees".

Its parliamentary leader, Joaquin Almunia, implored other parties: "We must all leave the crown out of our arguments."

Diario 16 said Mr. De La Rosa gave lavish gifts to the king up to May 1992 when he had to quit as KIO representative in Spain. He now faces KIO lawsuits in Madrid and London alleging he and other former KIO executives made off with Kuwaiti funds.

The KIO, which claims its \$5 billion investment in Spain was squandered, filed a criminal lawsuit in Madrid in January 1993 and subsequently in London. The Madrid case has bogged down.

But a London court last month required Mr. De La Rosa to explain \$5 billion pesetas (\$440 million) in missing KIO funds. He refused, saying the matter fell under Spanish jurisdiction.

Mr. De La Rosa and Mr. Conde rose to wealth and fame in the 1980s when quick fortunes were to be made in Spain's economic boom.

200 feared drowned in Bangladesh storm

COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh (R) — Nearly 200 Bangladeshi fishermen were missing in the Bay of Bengal after a storm lashed the coast and offshore islands, fishing community leaders said Saturday.

"Six trawlers with 96 crewmen have been missing at the sea and it's feared they have drowned," Ekramul Hussain Chowdhury, leader of the Cox's Bazar mechanised fishing boats owners association

said.

Other community leaders said another 100 fishermen on 15 trawlers remained unaccounted for in the coastal district of Barguna after the storms, which lashed the coast and offshore islands late Thursday.

Mr. Chowdhury said the sea was rough and heavy rain was still battering the coastline although the storm swept past Bangladesh early Friday.

One man was killed on the

island of Maheshkhali Friday when his house collapsed because of heavy rain, police told reporters.

The storm, generating winds of up to 80 kph (50 mph), flattened hundreds of thatched homes and triggered a five-foot high tidal surge that inundated low areas, sending salt water into crop fields. An estimate of the losses has not been made, officials said Friday.

Jordan Times

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Way to enlightened media

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's speech to senior officers in the army and security forces on Thursday continues to send shockwaves across the country. The ripple effects of the speech, though, were most noticeable by the mass media which have been especially targetted as having gone astray in their mission. The government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker is expected to respond to the new challenges posed by the King's address on several fronts, mainly the press.

Now there is talk about amending the Press and Publications Law on the assumption that its current provisions are responsible for most, if not all, that is wrong with journalists and other members of the mass media. The prescription for rectifying existing shortcomings in journalism appears to take the course of added punitive measures against violators of the current norms, including increased fines and prison terms for the people found guilty. Closing down publications which commit "professional sins" is projected to be more liberally pursued in the future to put an end to the current state of affairs.

We will be the first to admit all is not well with the mass media in the country, be it electronic or print. The ailment that we still detect in all forms and manifestations of mass media are often characteristic of the developing world where the struggle for a free press is normally an uphill task impeded by many factors ranging from lack of information to sub-standard professionalism to archaic laws. If we examine the tortuous path that journalism in Jordan has taken in recent years, we readily notice that it was shaped by periodic contradictory signals, be they of the legislative vintage or sheer policy considerations. It is fair to say then that some confusion, rudderless or fluctuating information policies reigned supreme in our midst for much too long. This state of affairs is by no means the sole fault of the people who take part in the profession. There are enough errors to pass around all parties connected with it directly or indirectly.

If we take, for example, the mistaken role of some Jordanian newspapers in promoting provincialism that found expression in the treatment of the now familiar passports subject, we have to admit that certain government policy directives or guidelines gave ammunition to this admittedly ill-conceived orientation. If our society is deeply divided on several fronts, this fragmentation was the making of players other than the press. We can go on and on attributing wrongdoings here and there but that was not the purpose or the goal of the Monarch's intervention on Thursday. We need to think forward and learn from the benefits of hindsight. The way to redress errors of judgement is to enter into a meaningful dialogue with the mass media on how to elevate its role into a higher plateau without the stick of government hanging over its head. It is not by stiffer or draconian legislation that journalism can improve itself. This can be done by an educational process founded on guidelines that are steady and coherent.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily Saturday lauded aid from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to the Arab citizens of Jerusalem as helping their steadfastness in the face of measures for the Judaisation of the city. Mahmoud Rimawi said that any help to the Arab people of the holy city to carry out housing projects is bound to consolidate their presence and their continued struggle for freedom. The Arab help for Jerusalem is most needed at present because Jewish settlers...

said the writer, who noted that the postponement of negotiations over the future status of the city was being interpreted by Israel as a mandate to pursue a drive to expand Jewish settlements and carry out geographic and demographic changes in the city. Furthermore, the U.S. Congress' vote to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem has strengthened Israel's hand and was instrumental in giving impetus to occupation authorities' plans to force the migration of Jerusalem's Arab citizens or compel them to acquire Israeli citizenship for the sake of remaining in their homeland, according to the writer. He said that Arab help for housing projects in East Jerusalem is a welcome step towards stemming the migration process and strengthening the Arab steadfastness in the Arab city.

A WRITER in Al Dustour expressed the view that the peace process will not end with the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Ali Safadi said the terrorist who killed Rabin had aimed at preventing the Israelis and the Palestinians from pursuing the course of peace and the return of Arab lands to their legitimate owners who would establish an independent state. But he said that the acting prime minister of Israel has made it clear that the tragic death of Rabin will not stop the government from pursuing its plans.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

A summit for contacts, not contracts

THE MIDDLE East and North Africa (MENA) summit was not meant to produce only contracts, but also contacts. Such contacts may lead to contracts in the medium and long-term.

Nor was the summit a formal governmental meeting for negotiations with a view to reaching consensus on political or economic decisions. It was mainly a meeting for businessmen and investors searching for possible opportunities in the Middle East region. Consensus for them is unnecessary and meaningless.

Even if certain decisions were made, such decision would not be binding except for those who wish to adhere to them. Those who agreed to the decisions made in the conference have the liberty to neglect them later on. There is no machinery for the follow up and enforcement, except perhaps at the level of nation states, and to the extent deemed necessary in the best interest of the states concerned.

Therefore, the final declaration prepared in advance, ahead of the proceedings, is not the proper instrument to evaluate the results of the conference and determine the extent of its success or failure. If anything, it was the least important event.

The most important result of the conference is that the concerned participants of potential investors obtained the information they needed to make informed decisions regarding the suitability of the investment climate, the competence of the public administration and the openness of the national economy for international business.

Some analysts thought the importance of the conference stems from the fact that it ended with the formation of four regional institutions. The most important of which is the Economic Cooperation and Development Bank for the Middle East and North Africa, to be based in Cairo. The name of the bank is getting longer and longer with each summit while its paid up capital and its chances of seeing the light are getting slimmer and slimmer.

The second institution is the Regional Council of Business Cooperation which is supposed to encourage cooperation between the private sectors of the countries concerned, but without resources and terms of reference.

Jordanian businessmen did not show any sign of enthusiasm towards this institution.

The third institution, which was given birth by the Amman declaration, is the Regional Council for Tourism and Travel which was charged with the responsibility of encouraging tourism to the region.

Finally, the declaration announced the formation of institutions already existing and functioning such as the General Secretariat of the economic summits, and the Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG) in Amman.

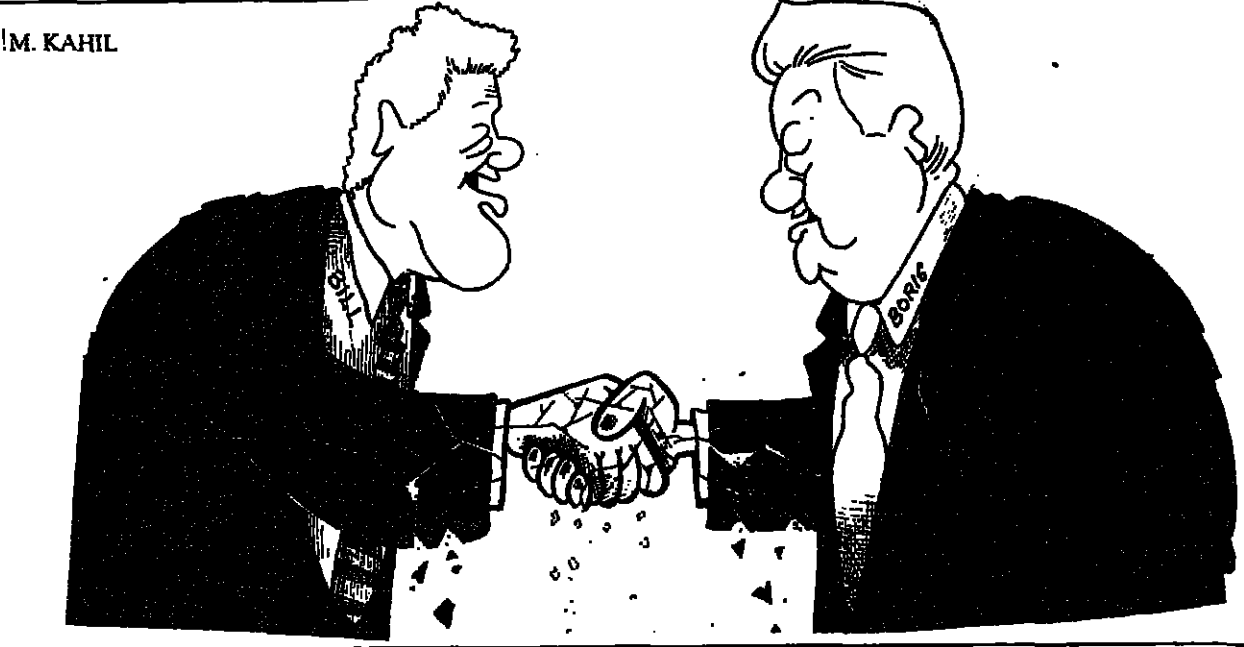
The General Secretariat, based in Rabat, is hardly aware of the arrangements worked out among the concerned parties, namely, America, the European Union, Japan, Israel, and the host country. REDWG is an offshoot of the multilateral conference already existing and functioning in Amman. It was included in the declaration just to show that Jordan finally received one of the regional institutions.

It is evident that all these regional institutions are hollow. They were born on paper without real contents. The idea is to make the final declaration sound important.

The language of the political part of the declaration was familiar to us. It adopted the usual Arabic expressions such as the participants expressed their satisfaction regarding the progress achieved on peace track (A) and expressed hope that steps will be completed on track (B) as soon as possible. The participants fully support the steps taken by the parties, etc.

The Amman declaration stressed the importance of following up and implementing decisions which were taken last year in Casablanca. The Cairo declaration next year will likewise stress the importance of following up and implementing the decisions that were taken in Amman. The Doha declaration of the year after will do the same. It is a copy of the language and culture of Arab League and its institutions.

The conference brought together officials and businessmen. Officials created noises and produced little. Businessmen made contacts which may give the best of results. The conference was a success because the host country handled it efficiently, and the businessmen ceased the opportunity.



Bosnia peacekeeping force deal saves face for Russia

By Robert Burns
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The deal that U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry and his Russian counterpart worked out for Russian participation in an international peacekeeping force in Bosnia is a face-saving solution to a sticky problem.

The faces being saved are Russian. They had insisted, for domestic political reasons, that their troops in Bosnia not operate under direct NATO command even though everyone seemed to agree it could work only with NATO in charge.

The solution: Satisfy the Americans by letting NATO give the orders, and keep the Russians happy by transmitting NATO's orders through a Russian general.

That extra layer in the military command structure gives Moscow the political distance from NATO it believes it needs but does not dilute the authority of NATO's top commander in

Europe, U.S. Army Gen. George Joulwan.

Put simply, the Russians will be taking NATO orders but not under NATO's letterhead.

The arrangement was announced Wednesday in Brussels, Belgium, after talks between Mr. Perry and Russia's Defence Minister, Gen. Pavel Grachev. They both said many details remain unresolved, and NATO as a whole must give its OK.

If completed, the deal relieves U.S. anxieties as well. The Americans want Russians as peacekeepers because of Moscow's traditional close relations with the Bosnian Serbs and as a possible stepping stone to more solid ground in Russian-European security relations.

It appears at first glance that the Brussels deal could work. Before it's put into practice, of course, a peace agreement is necessary among the warring parties.

Another obstacle yet to be overcome is Moscow's disagreement with Washington over what

organisation should exercise political control over the Bosnia peace force.

NATO military operations normally are controlled by the alliance's political body, the North Atlantic Council, comprising representatives of all 16 member countries. Russia, not a NATO member, is arguing for another organisation with broader representation to wield political control.

In many respects the problem of how Russian troops could work with NATO in Bosnia brings into play the major unresolved difficulties in post-cold war Europe.

Among these is Russia's hostility to NATO's expected eastward expansion to include such former Soviet allies as Poland, which the Russians see as a potential security threat. Bosnia may be a kind of proving ground for future cooperation between Moscow and NATO.

Mr. Grachev said Russia plans to contribute two or three battalions to the Bosnia peace force. He didn't say how many that was, but

in the NATO way of counting it would be 2,000 to 3,000 troops. The United States is expected to contribute about 20,000 troops in a total expected NATO force in the range of 60,000.

As described by U.S. officials, the Brussels deal means Russian troops would operate with American forces. On-the-spot control of the Russian force will be in the hands of an American general, possibly Maj. Gen. William Nash, commander of the 1st Armoured Division now training for Bosnia.

Mr. Joulwan, as the top NATO commander, will assign missions to the Russian troops, his orders transmitted through a Russian general acting as Mr. Joulwan's deputy. The Russian general, however, will have no veto power over Mr. Joulwan's decisions, U.S. officials told reporters.

The Russians also plan to send to Bosnia about 2,000 military specialists in such noncombat activities as bridge building and construction.

Taxis and regulation

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

ALMOST FIVE months ago, the Council of Ministers decided to encourage taxi drivers to trade in their old vehicles for newer ones. The government's plan calls upon the owners of old taxis to surrender vehicles that were purchased prior to 1991 to the government (rumour has it that the government wants to use some of the old cars for its own institutions, sell some to the public, and turn totally unfit cars to scrap). The owners would then receive vouchers which entitle them to purchase new cars that are exempt from all custom duties and other related taxes. The new cars (under five years old) are to be used only as taxis and cannot be converted to private use at a later date unless their outstanding duties are fully paid. Thus, old taxis are done away with and Jordan's yellow fleet is given a face lift.

This new law is valid for five years during which time, the decision makers assume, taxi drivers will rush to the government offices to surrender their old vehicles for new ones. However, to the government's surprise, very few taxi drivers have bought into this scheme and the applications are very slim so far. In light of the following, we may agree that much more is needed than a no customs duty provision and that the present law is short on market relevancy.

Owners of very old cars may take advantage of this law and see a way to purchase a new car at one third the normal cost. However, taxi drivers, in general, complain that they pay so much money in operating expenses that they do not have any money saved at the end of the day. To buy a new vehicle, even with the tax exemption, would still require an outlay of between 5-10 thousand dinars. Unfortunately the legislation did not take into account the income and wealth levels of taxi drivers.

The fact that they drive for very long hours, in poorly kept vehicles should have sent a clear signal to legislators that a law which involves such a large expenditure from an impoverished strata of the work force will neither find great appeal nor applicability.

Only if the old vehicle breaks down all the time and the expense of repairing it is equivalent to, or greater than, the cost of purchasing a new car, would be valid such a decision. Additionally, the new car is not an easy car to sell because it has to be taxed if the buyer's to use it for private purposes.

What about the comfort and safety of the driver? This consideration is not relevant here because the driver may not be the owner. Add to this that the unemployment rate in Jordan is estimated 18.8 per cent. The owners have little or no incentive to worry about the drivers' safety because they can always find other drivers who are willing to rent their old beat up vehicles. The renters already pay between JD 15 to JD 25 per day in rent for these vehicles. To make any money they are forced to drive recklessly for long hours (this contributes to motor vehicle accidents in Jordan). There is no ceiling in site on the amount that car owners can demand in rent from the drivers. The labour minister said, when addressing this issue, "Jordan is a free market society, in which prices are determined by the supply and demand" (Jordan Times Thursday-Friday, May 4-5, 1995). But, the government imposed freeze on the number of taxis has caused the price of the tag (the green taxi symbol on the side of a taxi identifying its affiliation) to rise to over JD 12,000. This sum alone is the greatest singular lump sum expenditure by a prospective taxi-owner and it serves as a license fee.

Why don't the customers refuse to get into ugly, beat-up taxi? Because they have to. The government has not allowed the number of licensed taxis or taxi stations to increase to meet the upsurge in population that occurred after the Gulf war in 1991. Owners of publicly registered cars, as a result of the government's supply limiting policy, have come to behave as government protected monopolies. This behaviour forces the driver and the customer to accept whatever comes their way.

Why can't drivers raise their fees to compensate for new car expenditures? Because the government controls these fees. The last rise in fare rates was in 1989. Even though the price of gasoline went up by 20 per cent, fares only increased by 10 per cent for the same period. Thus, they were unable to meet the rising costs of their inputs.

In 1994, according to the Public Security Department (PSD), 47.4 per cent out of the 14,520 registered small public cars were involved in accidents. In comparison, in that same year only 12 per cent of the 152,820 privately registered small cars were involved in accidents. Taxi drivers have a problem. Jordan has a problem and this law is not the solution.

"The fact that a person surrenders a car which has a market value to the government and receives no payment for the exchange must register as odd. Furthermore, this person must willingly commit himself to a big ticket purchase to replace what he already had given up. The rationality of such a decision must be subject to questioning."

What is the solution? The government should lower import taxes on all cars; license more taxi stations; and make fare rates compatible with the fluctuations in the rate of inflation. In other words, if customs on all cars fall to reasonable levels, more people will purchase vehicles, and rely less on taxis. As the demand for taxi services decreases, due to the availability of more substitutes, taxi owners will be forced to repair and maintain their cars or even replace them in order to generate more business by competing effectively for the scarce existing demand. Those who do not want fix their cars in order to attract the business of a discriminating consumer will simply drive themselves out of the market. Also, the licensing of more taxi stations will increase the supply and further increase competition in the sector. With increased competition, taxi owners will have to improve their cars on their own, especially if the cost of a new car is not as high as it is now.

Realising that the above solution, though optimal, requires a lot of legislation on the part of the government, a simpler solution may suffice for the present. The government should allow taxi owners to sell the old vehicles and use the proceeds towards the purchase of new tax exempt vehicles. This is a very simple improvement on the existing law, and it achieves, at no significant loss to the government, the government's declared goal of improving the state of the public vehicles in Jordan. Taxi drivers will see a chance to replace their old vehicles, and will view the tax waiver as a true government subsidy. Consumers will enjoy a better taxi service. The government will gain from the increased economic activity through income, corporate, sales, and other taxes.

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continued from page 11
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...on schedule despite
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...Mr. Arafat was also to
...a meeting of the PLO
...Executive Committee in the
...Egyptian capital on Sunday
...to discuss the peace process
...in the light of Mr. Rabin's
...Iraqi regime
...continued from page 12
...President Saddam...
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...Gen. Kamil said Jordan
...was not aware of his defection
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...country "it was impossible
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...would lead to an explosion
...of a civil war in Iraq.

Jordan celebrates King's birthday

(Continued from page 1)

Mohammad Hammouri, a school teacher from Irbid Governorate, presented King Hussein with a decorated copy of the Holy Koran in his own handwriting, a project on which he had worked for two and a half years.

Tens of thousands of people took part in Saturday's march through Amman's streets to mark the King's birthday. Representatives of the Kingdom's 12 governorates took part along with thousands of scouts and girl guides, university and school students, workers, representatives of various organisations, municipalities, youth centres and many others carrying posters, the King's portraits and the Jordanian flag.

The march, which started from the House of Parliament at Abdali in the presence of the prime minister, the committee members and ministers, headed for the Al Hashemeh Square in downtown.

It also involved the Jordanian Armed Forces brass band, along with units representing the Armed Forces, the Public Security and General Intelligence departments.

Various organisations provided decorated vehicles which drove along with the



The Badia police march through the streets of Amman Saturday amid the start of national celebrations marking His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday (photo by Youssef Allan)

town.

It also involved the Jordanian Armed Forces brass band, along with units representing the Armed Forces, the Public Security and General Intelligence departments.

Various organisations provided decorated vehicles which drove along with the

march with posters on their sides and portraits of the King while the streets were bedecked with decorative signs and Jordanian flag.

Helicopters and fighter planes presented an aerial display.

At the Hashemeh Square and in the other squares along the march route, men

and women sang national songs and presented dabkeh and other folkloric performances held near large tents pitched specifically for the occasion. The tents were decorated with flags and King's portrait as well as posters expressing good wishes to the King and allegiance to the Hashemite Throne.

Israel, PLO finalise details

(Continued from page 1)

Arafat here on Sunday for the first time since the murder of Mr. Rabin.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, meanwhile, told a press conference that a four-way meeting between Mr. Peres, Mr. Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Hussein was "possible" in the near future.

The Egyptian news agency MENA said Saturday that the "Arafat-Peres talks will last two days," but did not specify if Mr. Mubarak would join them.

Mr. Peres assured Mr. Arafat by telephone on Wednesday that the Israeli troop redeployment would continue on schedule despite Mr. Rabin's assassination.

Mr. Arafat was also to chair a meeting of the PLO's Executive Committee in the Egyptian capital on Sunday to discuss the peace process in the light of Mr. Rabin's

murder.

The PLO leadership will also examine a draft Palestinian election law, the committee secretary general, Jamal Al Surani, said.

The PNA meanwhile, announced a Nov. 15 holiday for the West Bank and Gaza Strip to mark the declaration of an independent state.

The self-rule authority, after a meeting in Gaza City, decided the date would be marked as a "national holiday," starting next Wednesday, Mr. Arafat's spokesman Marwan Kanafani told journalists.

The Palestine National Council declared the state at a meeting in Algiers on Nov. 15, 1988.

The self-rule authority also decided to entrust Mr. Arafat with appointing a delegation to hold planned reconciliation talks with the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) that the PLO wants to take place in Cairo.

Mr. Arafat gave his self-rule cabinet a report of talks he held with Hamas officials in Amman while he was there for the economic summit at the end of October.

Hamas want a serious and complete dialogue, to reach an agreement with the PNA in all issues," Mr. Arafat told his ministers according to Tayeb Abdul Rahim, the authority's general secretary.

He did not identify the Hamas officials, but one of them was the group's spokesman Mohammad Nazzal, according to other sources.

Meanwhile, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza eligible to participate in the first Palestinian general election will begin registering to vote on Sunday, a PLO official said.

Hassan Abu Libdeh, head of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), called on all Palestinians, including residents of Arab East Jerusalem, to register at

the some 1,700 polling stations in order to vote in the Jan. 20 election.

"It is a national duty for all citizens to take part in elections, and to start by registering at polling stations as of tomorrow," Mr. Abu Libdeh said.

Posters urging citizens to vote in the election for president and executive and legislative councils decorated walls of the PCBS building.

Palestinians over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Mr. Abu Libdeh told a news conference that officials would register Palestinians in 16 different polling districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He said a recent census conducted by his department put the population of the West Bank — including East Jerusalem — and the Gaza Strip at 2.5 million people.

He expected the number of eligible voters to reach 1.2 million.

Curbs on 'yellow press' should be democratic — experts

(Continued from page 1)

"If we address these two concerns, we will solve a major part of the problem," he said.

But both Mr. Sharif and Mr. Qudah insist that the government should not be empowered with the right to close down newspapers, saying any such right should only be given to the judiciary.

"We do not want to give any government the ability to use the law for political reasons against newspapers that might differ with it," said Mr. Qudah.

"What is there to guarantee that the executive authority will not misuse the law 'if it is given the right to close down newspapers'?" said Mr. Sharif.

Observers and analysts say that legislative changes can help put an end to excesses by the "yellow press." But the officialdom and the journalistic body

need to open a debate on the role of the press in the Kingdom, especially that the official media and the pro-establishment press were also criticised by the King in his speech.

Members of the mainstream press say that they as well as the official media have always been supportive of the state and are at loss as to where they have failed to serve its policies.

"What is needed is a debate on the role of the press and what is expected from it," one former official said.

Mr. Sharif said that the performance of the official media should be assessed and the areas of failure must be identified in order to redress them.

In a democracy, said one official, the role of the press is to act as a watchdog, monitoring the policies of the government and pinpointing wrongdoings. But this is done in a professional

way where information is verified and accuracy is held sacred.

In Third World countries, however, the press is "a mobilisation press" which works to rally the people around the policies of the state and highlighting its achievements, said Mr. Sharif.

Jordan, observers say, is at a transitional period when many issues are surrounded by vagueness and the role of the press has yet to be agreed on. Both the press and the government have not yet suitably adapted to the new conditions, said one observer, adding that the press needs to invest more in training journalists and the government has to understand better how to use the press to its advantage.

As the press moves towards playing the role of its counterparts in established democracies, the govern-

ment has to modernise its approach to journalists.

Mr. Qudah said that it was still difficult for journalists to obtain information from government sources, and a former government official said the government had to work more on winning the media's support for its policies.

One observer pointed to how Western governments try to generate support for their policies through talking to the people through the press, holding press conferences, meeting with journalists to convince them of the viability of their policies and often leaking information through the press to sound out public opinion.

The government here must allow journalists more access to information and work harder on winning the media's support for its policies, said one observer.

'Suspects targeted Arabs'

(Continued from page 1)

attend a memorial rally on Sunday evening at Kings of Israel Square, to be renamed Yitzhak Rabin Square.

The city of Tel Aviv, organising the assembly, said his widow Leah will speak at the site.

On Friday, a Tel Aviv court remanded Michael Epstein, 23, a friend of Amir, in custody for five days on suspicion of "conspiracy to commit a felony."

Police said Epstein, like the other suspects, knew of Amir's plans but did nothing to stop him. Epstein was also accused of organising with others to attack Arabs.

Holding open the possibility of more arrests, Mr. Shahal said the group had stockpiled weapons and explosives — either stolen or home-made — to attack Arabs and the prime minister.

"Yigal Amir was the central figure in planning the murder (of Rabin). He had two active accomplices: his brother Hagai Amir and Dror Adani," Mr. Shahal said.

Hagai Amir, 27, was arrested on Saturday on suspicion he made at least one of the hollow-nose bullets used to kill Mr. Rabin. Police said they found an arsenal of weapons and explosives at the Amir family home in the north Tel Aviv suburb of Herzliya.

Adani, 27, was remanded on Thursday for 15 days while police prepare charges against him. His mother said he was blameless.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, meanwhile, called for amendments to the "law of return" to keep out Jewish extremists considered undesirable in Israel.

On a sunny Sabbath in Jerusalem, people of all ages and from all walks of life added to the mountain of flowers on top of Mr. Rabin's grave and the candles circling it.

Most of them came from Tel Aviv, taking advantage of their day off in an almost carnival atmosphere, compared to the grief and shock earlier in the week.

Tradesmen did brisk business selling bagels and drinks outside the cemetery. Taxi drivers complained of traffic jams and police closed off roads near Mount Herzl.

The mourning period was to end on Saturday night, according to Jewish tradition.

Leah Rabin, President Ezer Weizman, government ministers and the army's top brass are to attend a commemoration service at his grave in West Jerusalem on Sunday.

Supporters of Meir Kahane, killed five years ago in New York, plan to go ahead with their own memorial service in Jerusalem for the slain extremist rabbi on the same day as Mr. Rabin's in defiance of a police ban.

Mr. Sarid, turning on the discredited far-right, said the interior and immigration ministries should draw up a blacklist of "undesirable" Jewish extremists.

The "law of return," which he wants changed, allows any Jew from around the world to adopt Israeli nationality.

Interior Minister Ehud Barak, meanwhile, has ordered his department to scrutinise "immigration candidates to try to prevent the arrival of extremists," most of whom come from the United States.

The main Romanian opposition newspaper said in its Saturday edition a group of Palestinians planned to assassinate Mr. Rabin during a trip to Romania in 1979.

Romania Libera said the Israeli leader was to have been killed during a trip to

the erstwhile Soviet bloc state in August 1979 by a Palestinian group, but the attack was foiled after security forces were alerted about the plot.

Mr. Rabin had travelled to Romania in 1979 on the invitation of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, whose regime maintained good relations with both Israel and the PLO.

Romania Libera said the attack was due to have been carried out at Neptun on the Black Sea coast, where it said Ceausescu had organised a secret meeting between Mr. Rabin and a Palestinian delegation.

However, the Palestinian delegation, disguised as a tourist group, were overheard by their tour guide, Viorel Florescu, discussing a plan to assassinate Mr. Rabin.

The guide immediately informed the Romanian tourism office, and Mr. Rabin's itinerary was changed. The tour guide was found dead the next day, the newspaper said.

Iraqi regime on way out — defector

(Continued from page 12)

President Saddam's daughter Raghad was thinking to go back.

Gen. Kamel said Jordan was not aware of his defection until his arrival in the country. "It was impossible for me to arrange for the defection or discuss it with any Arab country before departing because this harms my history and reputation," he said, stressing that he received the King's consent to stay in Jordan only after arriving in Amman and meeting with the monarch.

Gen. Kamel said work to oust the regime should be done in accordance with a well-prepared plan, warning that any swift action to do so would lead to an explosion and a civil war in Iraq. He

emphasised that he was working patiently to achieve that goal because his movement was in need for establishing relations with other parties within Iraq, including tribal forces and the army, and said he was in need of all the support he can get, including foreign powers and the persons in Iraq he did not get in touch with since his defection.

He described the recent referendum on the regime in Baghdad as unsuccessful and unconstitutional and said the Iraqi leadership should be elected by the public. "What happened is that the Revolutionary Command Council, which is illegal and unconstitutional, nominated its leadership... how can there be a revolution for 27 years... the revolutionary council should have existed only for one or

two years.

"What happened is that the (Baath) Party forced the people not to tell the truth. It distributed its officials in all electoral constituencies and any 'no' to the president would have made the official in charge of that area responsible. All security, military and party apparatus were mobilised to serve that purpose.

"If we presume that they have changed their revolutionary style to a constitutional one, why did they keep the revolution?"

"The results of the referendum were shameful. It might have sounded true were they 70 or 75 per cent in support of the regime, but to have it 100 per cent is irrational... how can this happen while there are five million Iraqis scattered around the world, not

to mention the Iraqi Kurds in the north?"

Gen. Kamel said those thinking of dividing Iraq were losers. He said the Americans, the international community and the Arabs have a lot to lose in case Iraq was split.

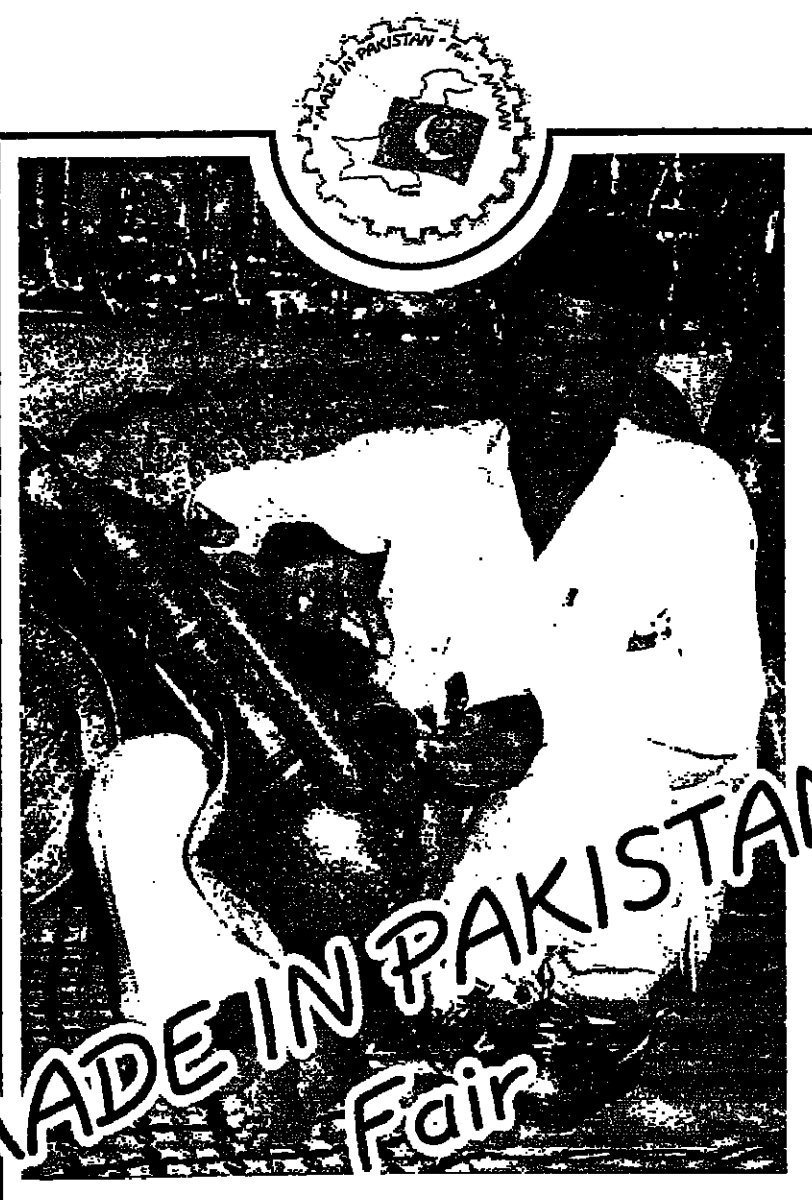
Gen. Kamel said he intended to visit Syria and other Arab countries to brief Arab leaders on the situation in Iraq and seek their support, but said he will not allow any country to direct his moves.

He denied that he took with him millions of dollars from Iraq and said Iraqi officials gave conflicting figures on the alleged amounts, saying some said \$8.17 million and others \$35 million, and stressed that these conflicting figures prove that the allegations are baseless.

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Arabs press on with ambitious trade project

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states have launched the final state of an ambitious project to set up a network to activate flagging trade among them in long-standing plans to merge their economies, operators said Friday.

The first two phases of the Abu Dhabi-based computerised data network, the first in the Arab World, have been completed while the third would be finished early next year, the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) said.

The AMF, the Arab League's main financial body, is setting up the \$3 million network with the help of the United Nations Development Programme and the Geneva-based Global Trade Centre.

"The third and last stage has been launched and the network would be completed in early 1996," the AMF said in its monthly report.

The network, which has already been connected to several Arab states, is part of a \$500 million fund created by the Abu Dhabi-based AMF around four years ago to finance inter-Arab trade.

The fund has provided more than \$400 million in soft credits to commercial exchanges within the Arab region but officials have complained the figure lagged far behind the fund's capacity of \$1 billion a year.

They attributed this to the limited industrial base in the Arab World, similarity in products and preference of the superior foreign items.

But the officials hope financing of local exports would encourage Arab producers to upgrade the quality of their products and face competition.

The fund is also part of an AMF drive to help member state tackle their economic

problems, including trade deficits, debts and slow growth rates. The drive focuses on encouraging members to push ahead with reforms and switch to market economy after decades of state control.

The AMF report said the trade data network, which will eventually be linked to all 22 members of the Arab League, would use advanced technology to ensure access to regional and international markets.

It will also distribute information to member states on each market in the region as well as products, demand, supply and the economy of member states.

"There is no doubt this will help members identify export markets and consequently boost inter-Arab trade," the report said.

Trade among Arab states has remained below 10 per cent of their total trade over the past two decades due to customs barriers, lack of financing of exports, and problems associated with storage and communication.

Political rifts are also to blame as they are the main reason for reluctance by most Arab states to remove the customs barriers in line with a free trade signed by regional countries three decades ago.

"Securing financing and identifying export markets remove one problem in inter-Arab trade. Other problems need to be addressed, especially the high customs duties imposed by member states," one expert said.

AMF figures showed exports among Arab countries stood at around \$12.88 billion in 1993, accounting for nearly nine per cent of their total exports of \$142.3 billion. Internal imports of \$11.1 billion formed nearly 8.7 per cent of the total imports of \$126.6 billion.

Lebanon sets out demands for EU partnership accord

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon has told the European Union (EU) it will need substantial aid to offset the revenue losses and increased competition that it will experience as a result of signing a free trade agreement with Brussels.

Chief Lebanese negotiator Zager Al Hassan, the secretary general of the foreign ministry, made the comments in a speech in Brussels Thursday at talks on a comprehensive "partnership agreement" between Lebanon and the EU.

The Beirut French-language daily L'Orient-Le Jour reported extracts of his comments in its Friday edition.

"Putting in place a free exchange zone between the union and Lebanon will immediately translate for us into an important loss of fiscal revenues, and so into an increase of the budget deficit," Mr. Hassan told the EU negotiators at the start of talks.

"The signature of a free exchange agreement would risk putting most of our sec-

tors in difficulties," he said. "In short, this accord would impose certain sacrifices on us for which there must inevitably be some compensations."

The proposed EU-Lebanese partnership pact, part of a series of Brussels agreements with Middle Eastern countries, will replace a 1977 protocol that covered economic, trade, cultural, tourist, political, security and development issues.

Lebanon's imports outstrip exports by a ratio of about 10 to one and a substantial proportion of the cash-strapped government's revenues comes from customs duties.

Mr. Hassan said cutting customs tariffs would lead to loss of revenues and necessitate EU help to adapt the Lebanese taxation system to increase internal revenues and also to help Lebanese enterprises adjust to the new system.

He said Beirut could not use all the funds made available to it by the EU during its 1975-90 civil war but it was now urgent to increase the level of EU aid.

World Bank warns on U.S. aid threat for poorest states

PARIS (AFP) — The World Bank warned Friday that the world's poorest countries, mostly in Africa, would face dramatic consequences if the United States halves its contribution to the International Development Association (IDA).

IDA is the World Bank's affiliate for interest-free long-term lending to countries that had an average per capita annual income of barely \$400 last year.

Its future funding is now in the balance because the Republican-dominated U.S. Congress proposes to roughly halve U.S. contributions to IDA for the current financial year.

The World Bank fears this could induce other donors to invoke the existing burden sharing and proportionally cut their own commitments to IDA's 11th replenishment (IDA-11), for the three years starting next July.

A scenario worked out by the bank's economists, shows a possible 50 per cent reduction in funds available for IDA lending over this period could sharply cut IDA aid to

over 30 African countries, including 14 rated as severely indebted.

It would also severely affect the outlook in such countries as Vietnam, one of IDA's five poorest clients, and Armenia, where IDA has become a key financing partner in the transition to market economy.

"In Cameroon, Malawi and Senegal, major cuts would undermine recent reform gains," the bank said.

"In Eritrea, Angola and Ethiopia, they would virtually halt post-war reconstruction, and in Zambia and Cote d'Ivoire they would make debt service virtually unbearable," it added, noting that growth prospects would "diminish greatly" in all these countries.

IDA could meet a shortfall either by reducing the size of credits or by focussing its aid on better performing countries.

But the bank said IDA, which has provided emergency aid to such countries as Rwanda and Haiti, would clearly have difficulty offering similar assistance to Bos-

nia, or Angola and Liberia, now emerging from civil wars.

If IDA were forced to seriously curtail its lending, "new money" would not be available to help debt-ridden African countries finance economic adjustment imposed by their creditors and assist their "exit from over-indebtedness," a top World Bank official said.

Debt was "the major obstacle to investment" in Africa's poor nations and "must be addressed," World Bank Vice President Edward Kim Jaycox told a group of reporters here Friday.

He said IDA was "irreplaceable" because no other aid authority would have the security to "go into areas where IDA is now working."

Mr. Jaycox said he had sought to impress on U.S. politicians that for every \$1 contributed by the U.S., IDA as a whole was mobilising \$5, bringing another \$10 from other sources.

Senior finance officials from over 30 donor countries supporting IDA are to meet in Luxembourg next Friday

and Saturday for their fifth round of talks so far this year on the IDA-11 replenishment.

The World Bank's IDA-11 spending target is about 15.3 billion SDR (\$23.7 billion), against 13 billion SDR (\$18 billion) under IDA-10.

This would require a U.S. contribution of just under \$1.0 billion a year, down from \$1.25 billion under IDA-10. But Congress has proposed only \$700 million for the current year.

The IDA "deputies" aim for a final deal by year-end. But Joseph Stiglitz, President Bill Clinton's chief economic adviser, told AFP here this week he thought a breakthrough in the budget stalemate between the U.S. administration and Congress was unlikely before Christmas.

He recalled that Mr. Clinton, addressing the International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meeting last month, "strongly and clearly" committed the U.S. to support IDA fully.

But Mr. Stiglitz said he would not try to guess what the final outcome might be.

Vatican expects surplus, says image problem over

VATICAN CITY (R) — The Vatican's top financial officer said Friday he believed the Holy See had overcome "the image problem" caused by the Banco Ambrosiano affair of the 1980s and people were now contributing more generously.

Cardinal Edmund Szoka told a news conference the Holy See forecast a small budget surplus in 1996, its fourth in a row.

The Holy See posted its first budget surplus in 1993, after 22 years of deficits that forced Pope John Paul to divert funds earmarked for world charities in order to

take up the slack.

Cardinal Szoka also said that the Holy See has considered seeking corporate or other types of sponsorship for Vatican Radio — one of its biggest cost burdens — but that the worldwide nature of the shortwave broadcasts would make it difficult.

Cardinal Szoka, president of the watchdog Prefecture for Economic Affairs, said the Holy See expected a 1996 surplus of about \$329,000 after expenses of about \$176.7 million and income of about \$177 million.

He said the Vatican was also expecting to post a small surplus for 1995, but gave no figures. The deficit hit a peak of \$87.5 million in 1991.

The cardinal, the former archbishop of Detroit, said it was the first time the Holy See was able to forecast a surplus in its consolidated projected budgets for the following year.

"I think that certainly the Holy See suffered from a bad image for a while," Cardinal Szoka said in response to a question. "I don't think justifiably, but it was there and there was a lot of confusion."

The Vatican Bank, known as the Institute for Works of Religion (IOR), was thrust into the world financial spotlight in 1982 over its links to the failed Banco Ambrosiano, which collapsed that year in Italy's worst private banking failure.

The IOR, which manages money for religious orders and whose activities do not figure in the Holy See's budget, had a small holding in the Ambrosiano. Investigators held it at least partly responsible for the crash. The Vatican denied wrongdoing but paid creditors \$250 million as a "goodwill gesture" at the time.

"The Holy See's image suffered. It appeared as though we were not very good administrators, that we were not very good managers," Cardinal Szoka said.

Following the Ambrosiano affair contributions from the faithful and organisations fell but in past years the Holy See has become much more open about its finances, issuing regular reports audited by outside companies.

After the Ambrosiano affair the Pope set up a committee of 15 cardinals from around the world to oversee

Vatican finances.

"Our reports have complete transparency," Cardinal Szoka said. "We are not trying to hide anything. That image has, I think, helped contributions."

The Holy See's budget covers the Catholic Church's central administration and its diplomatic missions as well as Vatican Radio, the newspaper L'Osservatore Romano and the Vatican's printing and publishing houses.

EU strikes key accord with Morocco

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The European Union (EU) and Morocco Friday concluded a far-reaching association accord that should prove to be the cornerstone in a new partnership between Europe and North Africa.

The partnership is scheduled to be launched at a Euro-Mediterranean conference in Barcelona Nov. 27 and 28.

The specific agreement with Morocco will be initial-

led next week along with a fishing accord that sets out catch quotas for Spanish and Portuguese trawlers in Moroccan waters.

Negotiations on the deal with Rabat got under way in February 1994 and covered political dialogue, the gradual establishment of a free-trade zone and cooperation in financial, social, scientific and cultural domains.

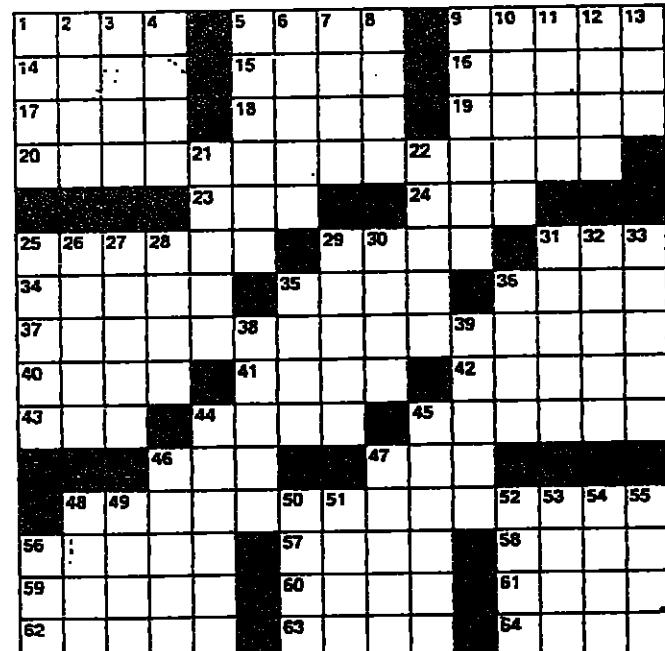
Further talks on the finan-

cial chapter of the agreement are to start next week in Rabat. But analysts here predict that Morocco will be able to count on EU aid in the amount of \$455 million during the first three years of the life of the association accord.

The sum represents Morocco's share of an overall figure of \$6.09 billion the European Union foresees as needed to finance Euro-Mediterranean cooperation from 1995 to 1999.

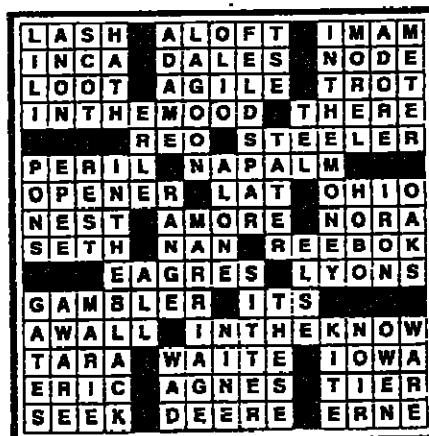
THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson

- ACROSS
1 Torment
5 Pig
9 Something of value
14 Game opener
15 Therefore
16 Pool worker, of sorts
17 Horse color
18 Too bad!
19 Arenose
20 Football team
23 Lion's lair
24 Clumsy craft
25 Like some potatoes
29 Slug or song
31 Insect
34 Assumed name
35 Stop
36 Goad to action
37 Revolutionary commander
40 Karenina
41 Single time
42 Faulty
43 Legal matter
44 Fits to —
45 Egg dish
46 Summer drink
47 Branch
48 Quadraped of song
56 Seize
57 Orient
58 Served
59 unreturnably
60 Floating ice mass
61 Projecting rock
62 Soothsayers
63 Be likely
64 Roll call word



- DOWN
1 Biting remark
2 Celebes ox
3 Kind of type: abbr.
4 Camper's shelter
5 Shone brightly
6 Synthetic fabric
7 Culture medium
8 Light wine
9 Classify
10 Follow stealthily
11 Dispatched
12 Terminates
13 Plaything
21 That is
22 Social class
25 Of the cheek
26 Dress shape
27 Omens
28 Sounds of laughter
29 Mockery
30 Other
31 Calendar word
32 Dispenser of TLC
33 Meeting
35 Sharpen
36 Ditto
38 Traveler's abode
39 Marked by overacting
44 Takes by choice
45 Speechified
46 The Norse gods
47 Crime by fire
48 Family or shoe end
49 Loathe
50 Adroit
51 Stiff wind
52 Speed word
53 Farm measure
54 Bring up
55 Outer limits
56 Drs.

Yesterday's puzzle solved:



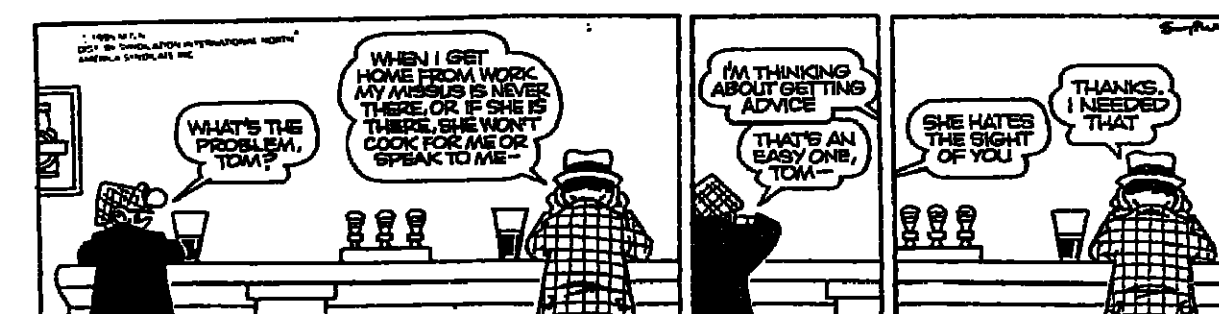
THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Cap



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get out to the sources of wisdom and understanding which most appeal to you and then in the evening today handle family matters well.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think over how to become more successful in the future during the morning today. In the afternoon, study periodicals.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Go over mental affairs with others during the day-time today and tonight study into money matters. Enjoy good friends during the day.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Meditation can reveal what can be of greatest benefit to you in the days ahead. Later, this evening you can make ideal plans.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is a fine Sunday to study just how to gain your finest objectives today, then do the activities necessary for such and start the ball rolling nicely.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You now understand just how to make your vocational matters work much better today and to your big advantage for success.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you think more logical today, you will know how to gain your greatest aspirations. Be understanding of others' premeditations.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Talk over with your mate just how you can improve the relationship in the morning today, then you can make new contacts of worth.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a good day to get outside duties handled well and also gain prestige. Talk matters over with allies and come to a meeting of minds.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Handle whatever will please your best friends today and make them happy. Then later tonight have wise discussions with allies.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get out with congenial friends and loved ones and have a good time today and then you can handle little duties at home.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Talk over with your family this morning how best to improve conditions there, then later enjoy some hobby in the evening.


Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

where it will buy 80 long-range strike aircraft. It could be the 20th century's last big military aircraft order, though possibly worth less than Riyadh's \$9 billion order for 72 F-15s from McDonnell Douglas Corp.

McDonnell Douglas Corp.

T

7/11/1966



CODE	SYMBOL	PREV. CLOSING	CLOSING PRICE
ADDED			
		PRICE	

3250	240.00		400.50U
7030	4.47D		4.26D
8004	3.63C		3.64D
19058	2.46C		1.30D
4205	4.45C		4.17D
2172	2.73C		2.75D
9119	2.15D		1.14C
0000	3.63C		1.83C
7137	1.70D		3.60D
8877	1.70L		1.75C
3458	3.0C		9.0C
0075	5.35C		5.25C
			4.4C

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★ The Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) has extended a total of JD 170 million in agricultural credits since it was established in mid 1995. The amount represents 80 percent of all credits given by the corporation. The remaining 20 percent, or JD 34 million, were given to finance purchases of required production material needed for investment projects. Nearly 114,000 farmers benefited of these financing services. The ACC also contributed 65 per cent of the private sector's investments in the agricultural field. The corporation's head said the ACC's future support will be to become an agricultural bank enjoying total independence and conducting all banking operations (Al Dustour).

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Gabriela Sabatini

Martinez, Sabatini upset in Philadelphia quarter finals

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Expected form took the night off at the \$800,000 Advantage Championships on Friday when second seed Conchita Martinez and fourth seed Gabriela Sabatini became quarterfinal upset victims.

Martinez, who won this tournament in 1993, was

bounced by unseeded American Lori McNeil 6-7 6-3 6-2, while seventh seed and defending champion Anke Huber upended Sabatini 7-5 6-2. In another quarter-final, veteran American Zina Garrison-Jackson ended Romanian Irina Spirela's chances of qualifying for next week's WTA Tour cham-

ionships with a 6-1 5-7 6-4 victory. Spirela, who had to reach the final here to claim the 16th berth in the 16-player season finale, was up a break at 3-1 in the third set before the crafty Texan mounted a rally, winning the final four games.

Friday's result left top seed Steffi Graf, who won her quarter-final Thursday, and fellow German Huber as the only seeds to reach the final four.

The semifinals pit Graf against Garrison, while Huber takes on McNeil, who like Garrison grew up playing in the public parks of Hous-

Graf set to end year of triumph and turmoil on up note

NEW YORK (R) — Steffi Graf is looking to put a fitting finishing touch on a year of professional triumph and personal turmoil by claiming the season-ending WTA Tour Championships title.

The world number one says she is looking forward to the intense competition at the 16-player season finale, which begins Monday in New York, to take her mind off the much publicised tax problems that have landed her father in a German jail.

That competition became a bit less daunting with the news that three-time champion Monica Seles had pulled out of the tournament with a knee injury.

Graf, winner of the most prestigious non-Grand Slam title on the women's calendar in 1987, 1989 and 1993, had cited Seles as her greatest obstacle to claiming a fourth title at Madison Square Garden.

Still, she seemed disappointed that her great rival would not be competing.

"Everybody was excited about having her play in the last tournament... it's a big loss," Graf said after a quarter-final victory in Philadelphia. "When you play a match with Monica, it motivates you and drives you. I like those kind of challenges."

The German star, despite being hampered by injuries and personal distractions for much of the year, takes a remarkable 1995 record into the championships.

Prior to this week's final tune-up in Philadelphia, Graf had compiled a 40-2 match record with seven titles, including the French Open, Wimbledon and a memorable U.S. Open triumph over Seles.

Long known as the Virginia Slims Championships, the season finale has a new name this year. The format, however, is the same — the year's top 16 performers battling in a single elimination competition that amounts to the second week of a Grand Slam without the drudgery of the first three rounds.

While Seles's withdrawal surely robs the championships of some of its luster, it should make South African Amanda Coetzer plenty happy. Had Seles used an unprecedented wild card invitation, Coetzer, who qualified 16th on points earned all season, would have been pushed out of the

playoff event.

Seles's absence not only stands to make life easier for Graf if she reaches the best-of-five set final, but it turns the bottom half of the draw into a wide open scramble.

Spain's Conchita Martinez becomes second seed in the weakened half of the draw. But she harbours no illusions of an easy road to the final.

"Every match is going to be tough for everybody," said the 1994 Wimbledon champion, who opens against Croatian teenager Iva Majoli. "Because I'm number two seed with Seles out doesn't mean much because you're in a draw where you have the 16 best players in the world."

Those in Martinez's path to the final include fourth-seeded Australian Open champion Mary Pierce and sixth seed Kimiko Date of Japan, both semifinalists last year.

The top half features Graf, third seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, who was runner-up in three Grand Slams this year and losing finalist to Graf in 1993, and defending champion Gabriela Sabatini.

The popular Argentine, who also won the season finale in 1988, seems to play her best tennis in New York.

"The championships are always special for me," she said.

Last year, Sabatini spoiled Martina Navratilova's farewell with an emotional first-round victory and then ended a bewildering 42-tournament title drought with a straight sets win over American Lindsay Davenport in the final.

This time around, a more confident Sabatini drew Davenport in the opening round.

"The last few months I've been playing great tennis," Sabatini said. "If I have to compare last year going into this, I'm at a much better level than I was last year."

Nineteen-year-old American Chanda Rubin will be the only debutante as everyone else in the elite field has been to the season-ending dance before.

The rest of the cast is seventh seed Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, eighth-seed American Mary Joe Fernandez, Anke Huber of Germany, Czech veteran Jana Novotna, Natasha Zvereva of Belarus and Brenda Schultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands.

Injured Young weighs risks of quick return

DALLAS (AFP) — San Francisco quarterback Steve Young knows his injured throwing shoulder has not healed, but he plans to risk his health here Sunday because of the importance of a victory over arch-rival Dallas.

"This is the ball game I want to play in, but I would be pushing myself. That's the nature of football players," Young said.

Southpaw Young's left shoulder was bruised last month in a game against Indianapolis. Since then, the 49ers have struggled on offense and fallen to 5-4. Young has been unhappy because all he can do is watch.

"I've had trouble faking my recovery, not faking it, but pushing it," Young said. "It has been very frustrating to stand on the sidelines. I have to settle into the reality and be more cautious."

Young missed practice Friday and cut short a workout Thursday to avoid further damage. His status will be in doubt until the game but he plans to play with pain. It's what stars do in the National Football League.

"When you can throw it hard, there's a grey area where you go play even though you're not 100 per cent," Young said. "When you throw the football, things have to be in good shape. When it's just a knee or something, you can tape it up and keep going."

Such an attitude pushed ex-Chicago linebacker Dick Butkus to sue former team doctor Theodore Fox in 1974, one year after he retired with permanently damaged knees.

Butkus proved Fox put team's needs ahead of his patient's recovery and won \$600,000.

Now second opinions are standard items in the contracts of many top players.

Michael Dillingham, the 49ers' team doctor, warned Young's agent, Leigh Steinberg, that the passer would try to return too soon.

Young said he is not proving his doctor correct, but said he is the ultimate authority on the risks he is willing to take with his body.

"There are no checks out there except myself knowing how much I can play with and the doctor being the professional knowing the risks and saying whether I should or shouldn't play," Young said.

"I expect the doctor and I will make this decision together. I'll understand the risks and make the decision."

Team doctors are hardly impartial observers. Former Oakland Raider team internist Robert Huizenga said loyalty to the team "invariably has a subtle effect on a doctor's decision-making process."

Owner Al Davis and doctor Robert Rosenfield pushed to keep injured Raiders' players on the field. Curt Marsh, an ex-Raider blocker, had a mis-diagnosed right ankle injury for five years.

He was forced to have his right leg amputated just below the knee last year.

Now clubs worry more about money than physician care. Jacksonville's new team put its medical post up to the highest bidder and reportedly made more than one million dollars by requiring the winner to buy luxury box seats and advertisements plus donate supplies to the club.

Six weeks ago, New England quarterback Drew Bledsoe suffered severe right shoulder separation in the first half of a game but kept playing to the end. He was out the following week because of the pain.

"To take a 23-year-old quarterback who has been defined as the franchise and put him in a helpless circumstance doesn't make much sense," said Steinberg, also Bledsoe's agent.

Steinberg has similar fears for Young, but the passer figures he will know when it is time to leave.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Indurain to miss Tour of Italy

MADRID (AFP) — Top cyclist Miguel Indurain will miss next year's Tour of Italy so that he can concentrate on winning a record sixth Tour de France. His Banesto team announced on Friday. The decision is the second blow this week for the organisers of next year's Giro, which is due to be revealed in Milan on Saturday. Spain's other big team, ONCE, which includes world number one Laurent Jalabert of France and Swiss rider Alex Zülle, have also withdrawn. Along with the Tour de France, Banesto said their other main objective in 1996 was the Tour of Spain, which Jalabert won this year. Ten riders, including American Andy Hampsten, are leaving Banesto, while only three men — including Britain's Jeremiah Hunt, newly-turned professional — are being recruited, as the squad is cut from 24 to 17.

Cascarino in form for match

VALENCE, France (AFP) — Republic of Ireland striker Tony Cascarino dropped a hint to manager Jack Charlton here on Friday night scoring for French Second division Olympique Marseille in their 2-0 victory over Valence. Cascarino, troubled by injury and suspension this season, scored his 10th goal of the campaign with a header in the 21st minute. The veteran of two World Cup Finals defied manager Jack Charlton's invocation of the five day rule, enforced the rule for the first time in 91 matches forbidding Irish squad members to play for their clubs, before the vital European championship qualifier away in Portugal next Wednesday. Marseille lie eighth in the Second division, nine points off leaders Caen.

English clubs turn down TV offer

LONDON (R) — The 72 clubs who comprise the three lower division of league football in England turned down a £118.5 million pounds (\$186.8 million) offer to televise their matches for the next five seasons on Friday. Disappointed Football Association officials withdrew their offer to the football league clubs after they failed to meet the deadline for a decision. The clubs' chairman met in London for three hours to discuss the five-year offer by the F.A. — and a rival bid from the Premier League which comprises the top 20 clubs in the country.

No move yet for Astros

HOUSTON (AFP) — Baseball's Houston Astros, who reportedly lost 60 million dollars over the past three years, will remain here for another season despite a \$150 million offer to move the club to Washington. The city had failed to meet the conditions Astros' owner Drayton McLane set out for keeping the club here, including the sale of 25,000 season tickets. But a drive in the past two weeks produced 17,000 and increased corporate support. McLane denied a newspaper report here saying he planned to sue his fellow owners and challenge their right to deny a move under a federal anti-trust exemption. The owner made no promises beyond next season and could follow a relocation pattern established by owners to seek a shift. McLane wants renovations in the Astrodome but the city has been unwilling to fund the changes.

Ince is staying at Inter

MILAN (R) — Internazionale coach Roy Hodgson said on Friday that midfielder Paul Ince, widely rumoured to be about to return to England after three troubled months in Italian soccer, was staying at the club. "We have Paul Ince who is staying with us," he told reporters, in response to questions about failed attempts to sign Swedish international Jonas Thern from Roma. "And having two players in that role would have been a problem." Hodgson, seemingly closing the Ince saga, said that in recent weeks he had "never heard of any difficulty that might have made him (Ince) wish to return to England."

Aussie boycott plan questioned

MIAMI (AFP) — Marianne Werdel Witmeyer, the WTA Tour Players Association president, said women's players are "nowhere near" ready to boycott the Australian Open next January. World co-number ones Monica Seles and Steffi Graf are among the players who have signed a protest letter over the Grand Slam event's plan to pay men more prize money than women next year. Money has been equal for the past decade. "If Monica says she won't go and makes a stand, that will be enough. Monica is the one everyone wants to see right now," former tour star Billie Jean King said. Witmeyer cautions the WTA is not yet ready to pull out of the Australian Open without talks. Tennis Australia's Geoff Pollard will speak with WTA Tour board members Sunday in New York, where the WTA Tour Championships begin Monday. Seles will miss the event with a knee injury.

Atlanta Games launches children's fund

ATLANTA (R) — Organisers of next year's Atlanta Olympics joined the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) to launch a multi-million dollar initiative aimed at easing the plight of 18 million war-affected children.

Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) President Billy Payne told a news conference that Olympic Aid Atlanta, the biggest humanitarian project ever launched by the Olympic movement, was designed to help victims of war in 14 countries.

"The Olympic ideal stands for peace, human dignity and the promotion of human excellence," said ACOG co-chairman Andrew Young, an

mayor of Atlanta and former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

"We are calling on the world community to work with us to promote peace and protect children from the scourge of war."

Payne said the international fund-raising project was an extension of the spirit of the traditional Olympic Games, which have halted all wars during the Olympic Games.

The U.N. General Assembly, in a resolution sponsored by 151 nations, last week called for a similar truce to halt all of the world's conflicts during the Atlanta Games, which will run between July 19 and August 4 next year.

Gwendolyn Calvert Baker, president of the U.S. committee for UNICEF, said the primary aim of Olympic Aid Atlanta was to raise \$7 million to meet the urgent needs of children caught in armed conflict.

But she said projects amounting to \$15 million were being for funds.

Those include \$4.2 million for programmes in Mozambique, where a 16-year-long civil war has left millions in need. \$1.12 million for Rwanda, which still bears the scars of a genocide war in 1994, and \$1.19 million for children suffering from the war in former Yugoslavia.

Baker said the cash would be raised by special programmes, individual contributions, partnerships with Olympic sponsors and other fund-raising efforts.

Spearheading the initiative on Thursday on behalf of athletes were two legendary speed skaters — American Bonnie Blair, who won six Olympic golds over three Winter Games, and Norway's Johann Koss, world record setting triple gold medalist at last year's games at Lillehammer.

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JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY ADVERTISEMENT

FOR ISSUE OF TENDER NO. JS/01/95 FOR 400KV OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINES ELECTRICAL INTERCONNECTION PROJECT BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA

Jordan Electricity Authority declares that they have secured a loan from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development for financing the 400kv electrical interconnection project with the Syrian Network. Jordan Electricity Authority intends to use part of this loan for financing of the Tender No. JS/01/95 for the supply and installation of the following 400kv Overhead Transmission Lines:

1- The 400kv single circuit overhead transmission line of a total length of about 60km from the Syrian border to the location of Amman North Substation.

2- The 400kv Double circuit overhead transmission line of a total length of about 40km from the location of Amman North S/SN to the location of Amman South S/SN.

The Tender includes the following options:

- 1- Supply of Steel Towers: Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of the steel towers for the two mentioned lines. The design and manufacturing drawings of the double circuit towers will be provided to the successful tenderer.
- 2- Conductors and Earthwires: Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of the phase conductors and the earthwires.
- 3- Optical Fibre Ground Wires (OPGW): Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of the optical fibre ground wires.
- 4- Insulators and Fittings: Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of insulator strings and fittings for the phase conductors and stranded steel earthwires.
- 5- Erection: Receiving of all necessary material for the 400kv transmission lines, transport and erection of the complete lines including the towers, insulator strings, conductors, earthwires, OPGW and fittings.
- 6- Turnkey: Design, manufacture, testing, delivery, insurance and erection of all needed 400kv transmission lines materials.

Tenderers who are interested to participate in any of the tender can obtain the tender documents from the Procurement Department in Jordan Electricity Authority main offices located between the 6th and the 7th circles- Jabbal Amman starting from Saturday 11/11/95 onwards against a nonrefundable amount of USD 1000 or equivalent in Jordan Dinars in favour of Jordan Electricity Authority for each set of tender documents and submission of a purchase order accompanied by a copy of the receipt for payment.

The purchase order should clearly include the Bidder's name, his local agent and address, telex, fax and telephone number.

Bids are to be submitted to the Secretary of Tendering Committee at the above address not later than 12:00 noon Amman time on Saturday 10/2/96 accompanied with a bid bond in the amount given in the tender documents.

FOR RENT

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JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY ADVERTISEMENT

FOR ISSUE OF TENDER NO. JS02/95 FOR 400KV SWITCHGEAR, REACTORS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT FOR AMMAN NORTH SUBSTATION ELECTRICAL INTERCONNECTION PROJECT BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA

Jordan Electricity Authority declares that they have secured a loan from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development for financing the 400kv electrical interconnection project with the Syrian Network. Jordan Electricity Authority intends to use part of this loan for financing of the Tender No. JS02/95 which includes design, manufacture, delivery, installation, testing, commissioning and guarantee of 400kv conventional outdoor switchgear as Option 1 or 400kv SF6 metalclad switchgear as Option 2 and control, protection and ancillary equipment complete with civil works for Amman North 400kv Substation.

Tenderers who are interested to participate in this tender can obtain the tender documents from the Procurement Department in Jordan Electricity Authority main offices located between the 6th and the 7th circles- Jabbal Amman starting from Saturday 11/11/95 onwards against a nonrefundable amount of USD 1000 or equivalent in Jordan Dinars in favour of Jordan Electricity Authority for each set of tender documents and submission of a purchase order accompanied by a copy of the receipt for payment.

The purchase order should clearly include the tenderer's name, his local agent and address, telex, fax and telephone number.

In case the tenderer requires the tender documents to be sent to him by mail, the express airmail cost will be added.

Bids are to be submitted to the Secretary of Tendering Committee at the above address not later than 12:00 noon Amman time on Saturday 10/2/96 accompanied with a tender bond in the amount given in the tender documents.





Uerdingen's Mustafa Dogan (right) wins a match. The match ended in a 1-1 draw (AFP photo) head shot duel against FC Kaiserslautern's Pavel Kuka during their German League

Hamburg draw with Dortmund

BONN (R) — In-form Hamburg staged a thrilling second-half fightback to draw 2-2 with Bundesliga champions Borussia Dortmund on Friday.

Dortmund's title rivals Bayern Munich struggled in a 1-0 stalemate with Hansa Rostock.

The results left the top two places in the Bundesliga unchanged, with Dortmund still ahead of Bayern on goal difference.

Third-placed Borussia Moenchengladbach now have a golden opportunity to join them if they can beat lowly Fortuna Dusseldorf.

Dortmund seemed ready to put their midweek German Cup defeat by Karlsruhe behind them with first-half goals from Michael Zorc and Andreas Moeller.

But Hamburg, revitalised by their new club president and former German World Cup star Uwe Seeler, struck back with two goals with seven minutes to share the points.

Hamburg's goals came from Andreas Fischer and Harald Sporer, delighting most of the 51,000-strong crowd and giving new trainer Felix Magath 13 points from his last five games.

The fightback pushed Hamburg up to fifth in the table — a dramatic improvement for a side which was languishing at the wrong end of the Bundesliga before Seeler and Magath took charge.

In contrast to the thrills in Hamburg, Bayern and Rostock fought out a dull draw, which flattered the Munich side.

Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn made a string of fine saves to keep the 13 times Bundesliga champions on level terms.

Hakkinen conscious but doctors cautious

Hill wins pole for final Adelaide Grand Prix

ADELAIDE (R) — Finnish driver Mika Hakkinen regained consciousness on Saturday after crashing heavily in the first qualifying round of the Australian Grand Prix, but medical officials warned of a possible relapse.

Hakkinen, 27, who lost control of his McLaren on Friday at an estimated 200 kph at the high-speed Malthouse bend, was not sitting up and speaking clearly, medical officials said.

The atmosphere in the paddock on Saturday's second day of practice was one of relief as news of the Finn's improvement came through. Briton Damon Hill took pole position without improving on Friday's time and will head the grid for Sunday's race alongside Williams team mate David Coulthard.

However, McLaren team boss Ron Dennis said doctors and neurologists treating Hakkinen had warned of a possible relapse into unconsciousness and said there was still an outside chance of brain swelling from the impact of the crash.

Hakkinen was listed in critical condition at Royal Adelaide Hospital, but Dennis said medical experts preferred to express the condition as severe concussion rather than brain damage.

The driver had been removed from intensive care earlier on Saturday and was being monitored closely. He was expected to remain in Adelaide for up to two weeks, Dennis said.

"Mika's recovery has been quite remarkable in the last eight hours. He is now off of the respirator. He is able to talk. He is lucid, asks questions about the corner on which the accident took place, has drunk water sitting up," Dennis said.

"I must stress, as positive as this sounds, the specialists are saying there is still a fear of uncertainty, and still some possibility of some sort of relapse, but their prognosis is positive," he added.

He said a piece of debris on the track sliced a four-inch long gash in Hakkinen's left rear tyre about two inches deep, causing the car to slip backwards, hit a curb and pirouette through nearly 360 degrees before slamming into a wall.

At impact, Hakkinen's head lashed against the car's steering column. He lost consciousness quickly after the accident as blood filled his lungs, only waking up briefly while being bathed under heavy sedation in hospital overnight, Dennis said.

There was no reason Hakkinen, considered among Sunday's top racers at the Australian Grand Prix after finishing second last month at Suzuka, Japan, could not again race at some point, according to the neurologists, Dennis said.

"The first thing that we all want is that he recovers and is able to lead a normal life, that is the first step. Any thought of driving and racing again is certainly not foremost in our minds," he said.

When told this morning while under ventilation he was not expected to race on Sunday, Hakkinen managed a "lopsided smile," Dennis said. His conditions had improved steadily from there.

He credited the swift response of the Grand Prix medical staff, who performed a tracheotomy on the young driver at the scene of the accident, with saving Hak-

kinen's life.

Hill's pole position was his first since the Hungarian Grand Prix in August and the 11th of his career.

He will start Sunday's 81-lap race hoping for his first win since Budapest and for an end to champion Michael Schumacher's attempts at a record 10th win in a single season.

Schumacher will start on the second row of the grid after recording the third fastest time. He was the only driver in the top four to improve his time on Saturday.

The German, who won the Pacific Grand Prix in Japan three weeks ago, has nine wins. This puts him equal with Briton Nigel Mansell who achieved the feat in 1992.

New tyres installed to satisfy F1 drivers

ADELAIDE (R) — New tyre barriers were installed around the Adelaide Grand Prix circuit on Saturday after drivers requested improved safety following Finn Mika Hakkinen's crash in Friday's opening qualifying session.

World champion Michael Schumacher, Austrian veteran Gerhard Berger and Briton Damon Hill toured the circuit on Friday evening after Hakkinen crashed and asked for more tyres at three different points around the track.

Russ Brawn, technical director from the Benetton racing team, told Reuters: "I understand their demands have been met and that the drivers are generally satisfied."

Practice sessions at the Adelaide street circuit proceeded normally on Saturday.

Tyres at the Malthouse bend were improved from just one row to three at the point where Hakkinen's McLaren struck.

"We asked for these extra tyres because we felt there had to be more," said Schumacher. "We told them we want three layers of tyres — not just one — at that place for tomorrow."

"What happened concerned us all and we need to see some big improvements. Everyone was very shocked by Mika's accident and something should be done," Damon Hill, who claimed

provisional pole position for the 81-lap race when the session restarted after a 42-minute delay, said: "It should be just a case of them going out and finding enough tyres to do the job overnight. We will have to see ..."

The accident revived memories of the spring of 1994 when after a series of high-speed accidents at Imola, Monaco, Barcelona and Silverstone, the sport was thrown into chaos following the deaths of Austrian Roland Ratzenberger and three-time world champion Ayrton Senna of Brazil.

Goodyear, the tyre company which has a monopoly in Formula One, said three left-rear tyres they had inspected were cut severely during the session on the bumpy streets, which suggested there was debris, kerbs or manhole covers with the potential to slash through racing rubber on the circuit.

Suns, Magic, Spurs post wins

LANDOVER, Maryland (R) — The Washington Bullets were about to end three years of futility against the Knicks when Deron Williams buried a three-point shot with just 2.2 seconds left to give New York 110-109 victory on Friday.

The Bullets led by as many as 15 points, 70-57, early in the third quarter and had a chance to put the game away in the final minute.

Instead, Juwan Howard missed four free throws and Calbert Cheaney missed one-of-two free throws down the stretch as the Knicks beat Washington for the 14th consecutive time, a streak that goes back to November 13, 1992.

Patrick Ewing led the Knicks with 25 points and Harper finished with 22.

At Indiana, the Sacramento Kings cemented their best start in franchise history with a 119-95 victory over the Pacers that raised their record to 5-0.

The win surpassed the previous club mark of 4-0 to open a season, set in 1952 and tied in 1960 when they were the Cincinnati Royals.

The game featured a vicious bench clearing brawl, set off when Michael "the animal" Smith went after Dale Davis after Davis committed an unnecessarily hard foul on Bobby Hurley.

In Boston, Dennis Scott scored 30 points to lead the Orlando Magic to a 110-94 victory over the Celtics.

The win was the third in a row for the Magic, who improved to 4-1 without injured superstar centre Shaquille O'Neal.

Scott, who was coming off a 32-point game in a triple overtime win over New Jersey Wednesday, scored 17 points in the third quarter when Orlando opened a 10-point lead.

Rick Fox led Boston with 19 points.

In Philadelphia, Shawn Bradley had 23 points and 22 rebounds and rookie Jerry Stackhouse continued his impressive start with 21 points as the 76ers scored a 104-90 victory over the Hornets.

Stackhouse, the third overall pick in the draft, is averaging 24.3 points per game.

Larry Johnson led the Hornets with 32 points and 13 rebounds, but the Sixers took control of the game with a 17-5 run in the first quarter.

In Toronto, Wesley Person scored 15 of his 23 points in the first half when Phoenix built a 14-point lead and the Suns held on for a 112-108 win over the expansion Raptors.

Charles Barkley had 21 points and rookie Michael Finley added 18, including 16 in the first half, for the Suns.

At Detroit, Grant Hill scored 12 of his 28 points in the second quarter to lead the Pistons to a 100-80 drubbing of the Cleveland Cavaliers, who fell to 0-5 on the season.

The Pistons ripped Cleveland in the second quarter, outscoring them 19-2 during the final 6:33 of the half.

In Miami, Kevin Willis paced a balanced attack with 18 points and Alonzo Mourning added 17 as the Heat remained



Sherman Douglas of the Boston Celtics #20 passes the ball as an opponent tries to stop him (AFP photo)

NBA results

Phoenix	112	Toronto	108
Detroit	100	Cleveland	80
Sacramento	119	Indiana	95
Miami	106	New Jersey	80
Philadelphia	104	Charlotte	90
New York	110	Washington	109
Orlando	110	Boston	94
Portland	108	Minnesota	102
San Antonio	104	Milwaukee	90
Utah	109	Denver	86
LA Lakers	100	Seattle	97
LA Clippers	98	Vancouver	91

Edberg, Courier bundled out of Stockholm Open

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Thomas Enqvist conquered Stefan Edberg in a battle between the Swedish tennis generations, while top seed Jim Courier was also sent packing at the Stockholm Open on Friday.

Second seed Enqvist beat six-time Grand Slam champion Edberg 6-3, 7-5 to reach the semi-finals, while Courier surprisingly went down 3-6,

6-7 (4-7) to Czech-born German David Prinosil.

Enqvist, 21, the brightest new tennis hope from Sweden, had his troubles in finally closing down the quarter-final contest as the 29-year-old Edberg saved two match points in the ninth game of the final set.

Edberg sprawled flat out and rolled over on the court as he slipped while reaching for a forehand, a mistake which gave world number eight Enqvist his two-match winning points.

But an attack of nerves set in, with Enqvist returning long on his first opportunity and then failing to reach a service winner from the former world number one, as Edberg reached 4-5.

The younger man got a

turnout case of the jitters in the next game, double-faulting for a break point and hitting a forehand out as Edberg clambered back to 5-5.

But Edberg later hit a weak forehand return to give Enqvist his third match point. This time, the second seed benefitted from a net cord bounce which sealed the match.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144	CINEMA TEL: 699238	CINEMA TEL: 677420	AMMOUN THEATRE TEL: 618274 - 618275	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD		
	Delan Walsh & Lora Leeni...in CONGO Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Denzel Washington Jene Hackman ... In CRIMSON TIDE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" Sylvester Stallone...in ASSASSINS Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Adel Imam & Yusra Birds of the Darkness Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15	MUSA HIJAZIN "Sumaa" in Hi Citizen daily at 8:30 p.m. Written & directed by Mohammad Shawaqfeh	In view of the travel of the actors abroad the theatre is closed until further notice

Iraqi regime on its way out – defector

By Saad Silawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Former Iraqi Industry Minister Hussein Kamel, who defected to Jordan Aug. 8, urged the Iraqi leadership to give up power and warned that political change in Iraq was imminent.

In an interview with the Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), General Kamel, who defected to Jordan with his brother and their wives, two of President Saddam Hussein's three daughters, said the Baghdad regime had no choice but to abdicate to avoid a civil war and to thwart a bloodbath in Iraq.

He said Iraqis were fed up with war, suffering, poverty and oppression and were eager to get rid of the current government.

Gen. Kamel admitted that Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990 was a mistake, and claimed that the Baghdad regime planned two other invasions of Kuwait in 1994 and 1995.

He said plans to invade Kuwait and eastern Saudi Arabia in October 1994 were drawn after studying the tactical mistakes of the 1990 invasion, but the plans were aborted.

He said that Iraq's belated

recognition of Kuwait was to no avail since the U.N.-imposed sanctions were not lifted. He added, the Iraqi leadership had decided that it would attack Kuwait if sanctions were not lifted by Aug. 31, 1995.

Gen. Kamel, who now lives in one of Amman's suburbs, said no Iraqi official dared to object to any decision taken by Saddam Hussein.

The general also said Iraq was in the last stages of producing a nuclear bomb before the invasion of Kuwait, but that the ensuing war ruined its schemes.

He said a "national salvation council" — which he declared he was establishing earlier this month to unite opponents of his father-in-law — was open to all Iraqi opposition groups with the exception of those advocating the division of the country.

"Our doors are open to our brethren in the opposition wherever they are. We will always hear them and interact with them," he said.

"But we will fight any (opposition) party working for the division of Iraq or spying for foreign parties. These two kinds of opposition we will avoid," he added.

Gen. Kamel said that he

would take a more active line after the announcement of his intentions to set up the opposition council and added that the council's political platform would be made public soon.

Gen. Kamel said his work within the regime before his defection was aimed at serving his country rather than serving those in power.

He criticised some opposition groups which he said were not serious in their work, asserting that these groups have become reliant on foreign parties.

Gen. Kamel denied that his defection was a ploy concocted by him and the Iraqi president and said those propagating such ideas aimed to absorb the shock resulting from his defection which he said caused a great deal of harm to the regime.

He also refuted claims that there were intentions by him or those who defected with him to return to Baghdad and said it was illogical to leave the country and then start negotiating with the regime on returning for new gains.

"No one who left Iraq with me intends to return. We all left after reaching a full agreement," he said in reference to news reports saying

(Continued on page 7)



CELEBRATIONS: Tens of thousands holding posters of His Majesty King Hussein and banners wishing him a happy birthday march through Amman on Saturday (see story on page one) (photo by Yousef Allan)

King honours officials and individuals behind success of MENA conference

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday hosted a lunch at Al Hussein Youth City to honour representatives of official and private institutions which took part in preparing for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit held in Amman Oct. 29-31.

King Hussein thanked all those who contributed to the success of the summit and said he was delighted by their work and the summit's achievements.

He recalled paying an inspection visit to the conference site before it was opened and being reassured on preparations, saying that

the success of the summit was a happy surprise for him and all Jordanians.

"I was hoping that everything will go well: the good preparations for hosting the summit and dealing with this great parley were a good surprise and a source of pride for me and all members of our large, united Jordanian family," the King said at the banquet.

His Majesty commended the cooperation and coordination among representatives of the private and public sectors, which, he said, helped offer a realistic image of Jordan and the perseverance and determination of Jordanians.

"You have achieved all our aspirations as we are entering a new stage which requires caution and preparation by all in the same spirit, resolve and determination to move our country, God willing, to the aspired future," he added.

The King said the summit was an extraordinary event and achieved great success not only for Jordan but also for other Arab countries.

King Hussein presented several of those who helped in preparing for the summit with medals and Royal gifts in appreciation of their efforts.

The lunch was attended by Their Royal Highnesses

Crown Prince Hassan, Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein and Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein.

It was also attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Oqasem, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, the King's advisors, HRH Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural secretary, the deputy prime ministers, the Crown Prince's private advisor, several ministers, the mayor of Amman, the chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the directors of the General Intelligence and the Public Security departments and other senior officials.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Sarvath meets JICA official

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, chairperson of the Young Women's Muslim Association, on Saturday met at the Royal Court with Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Director Kimo Fujita. Princess Sarvath and the JICA official discussed various projects carried out by the association and means of enhancing cooperation between the association and JICA. The meeting was attended by Japanese Ambassador in Amman Takayuki Kimura and members of the association's board of trustees.

Arab League urged to see suffering of Iraqis

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi on Saturday invited the head of the Arab League to visit the country and see first hand how its people are suffering under U.N. economic sanctions. "Hasn't the time come to head to Iraq and visit a country of 20 million people and ask about their suffering?" the official newspaper Al Jumhuriyah asked in an open letter to the league's secretary general, Esmat Abdul Meguid. The newspaper said it was the "Arab League's task" to restore Arab solidarity by allowing Iraq back into the Arab fold. Dr. Abdul Meguid on Wednesday asked Iraq to accept for a six-month trial period U.N. Resolution 986, which would allow it to export up to one billion dollars worth of oil per quarter under international supervision to buy food and medicine.

Ruling coalition resigns in breakaway Cyprus

ANKARA (AFP) — The ruling coalition in breakaway northern Cyprus resigned on Saturday after being in power since January 1994, the Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK said. However, Hakkı Atun, the head of the Turkish-Cypriot administration, will run daily affairs in the self-proclaimed "Turkish republic of northern Cyprus" until a new administration is formed, the agency said. The move follows the refusal by Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash to reshuffle his cabinet after three ministers from the left-wing Turkish Republican Party (CTP) handed in their notice at the end of October. The CTP was the coalition partner of Mr. Atun's centre-right Democratic Party (DP). They clashed in February over a property law but renewed their partnership in May.

Egypt student cuts off 'impure' penis

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian college student sliced off his penis because he was convinced it was an impure organ that impeded religious activity, an Egyptian newspaper said on Saturday. The daily Akhbar Al Youm quoted unnamed student's mother as saying her son had lately been praying rigorously and repeating unorthodox ideas about the cleanliness of male sex organs.

10 killed, 11 hurt in Egypt building collapse

CAIRO (R) — Ten people were killed and 11 injured when a building collapsed after a gas cylinder exploded in a cafe in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria on Friday local newspapers reported on Saturday. The government Al Ahram daily said at least 17 other people, including seven from one family, are feared trapped under the rubble of the five-storey building in Al Hadra area.

Prosecutor may appeal UAE verdict on Filipina

ABU DHABI (R) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) public prosecutor said on Saturday he might take to the supreme court the case of Filipina maid Sarah Balabagan who is facing 100 lashes and a year in a jail for killing her employer.

"We are currently studying the appeal court ruling. If we find that the punishment does not conform with the crime according to Islamic law then we will appeal to the Abu Dhabi Federal Supreme Court," Ahmad Al Mulla told Reuters.

"If we find the sentence was too light according to Sharia law then we will seek a tougher one."

Mr. Mulla said he could also seek a lighter sentence if it was determined that the ruling was too harsh given the crime.

"The prosecutor is supposed to act strictly according to the law. This means the defendant could benefit. And maybe we will agree with the ruling," he said.

A UAE Islamic appeal court in the oasis town of Al Ain last month sentenced Ms. Balabagan to 100 lashes and a year in prison to be followed by deportation.

The verdict fuelled outrage that erupted after a retrial court in September condemned the young maid to death for stabbing 70-year-old Almas Mohammed Al Baloushi 24 times last year.

It rejected Ms. Balabagan's claim that she acted in self-defence during a rape after an earlier court concluded she had been raped and sentenced her to seven years imprisonment.

Ms. Balabagan and her parents had expressed hope that UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan would spare her from the canings and imprisonment by granting a pardon. The UAE leader saved Ms. Balabagan from a firing squad by persuading the victim's family to show mercy and drop their demand for her execution in exchange for \$41,000 in blood money.

But a UAE official last week all but ruled out the possibility of a pardon.

A prison official on Saturday told Reuters that she had informed Ms. Balabagan that she would be serving the year in prison and the lashing would be carried out just before her release.

"We were told that there would be no pardon and that the sentence would be carried out. Sarah has been informed," the official said.

UAE officials were not available for comment on the report.

Ms. Balabagan's parents have decided not to appeal the verdict, saying they feared dragging out the case and risking a tougher sentence.

Mr. Mulla said he did not think there would be a pardon because "one year (in prison) is a light sentence."

Seminar highlights need to raise Arab women's awareness of their legal rights

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma said Saturday that non-government organisations (NGOs) must play a vital role to raise the awareness of Arab women about their legal rights.

Princess Basma, addressing a group of 100 women representing legal advice centres in 11 Arab countries, said that since the role of the NGOs was increasing worldwide and in all aspects, they need to review their planning and operational systems to influence their societies.

"NGOs became a main part of overall social development operations and of women's development in parliament, and it is the NGOs'

duty to review their current typical procedures and to create new operational system to achieve tremendous effects on the society," Princess Basma, told the opening session of a three-day Arab seminar entitled "Legal Advice Programmes for Women."

This change, Princess Basma said, is the way to achieve the necessary change in the social norms and the society's perception of women and their role.

Moreover, Princess Basma said, Arab women suffer from ignorance or lack of knowledge regarding their legal rights, "although there has been success and alterations in some legal issues."

"Most Arab women were unable to secure their legal rights or benefit from it either because of ignorance or be-

cause no legal rights exist are there to support them or because they are unable to benefit from it," she said.

Unfamiliarity with legal matters, the Princess added, is a common problem and is not limited to one society, but is found in all societies worldwide, "even in the advanced societies where women achieved a lot of successes and secured almost all their rights."

"This issue is very important, especially that the size of this problem in our region is larger than other countries and there is a need for national planning and programming to face it," Princess Basma said.

Asma Khader, president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), which organised the event, also stressed the importance of spreading legal

awareness among women.

"Political and historical factors played a role in legal ignorance among women in the Arab World, and we need to work on eliminating this ignorance not only among women, but among other individuals in the society," Ms. Khader said.

During the first day's activities, participants from 11 countries including Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, Bahrain, Algeria, Egypt and Jordan, exchanged views and experiences.

The gathering, held at Al Dhawabi Hotel in the Al Rashid suburb, aims at preparing better strategies for legal advice centres to aid women in legal and psychological advice based on each centre's own experience.

Van der Broek new favourite for NATO

BONN (Agencies) — European Union (EU) Commissioner Hans van den Broek of the Netherlands has the best chance to fill the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) top job after his compatriot Rüdiger Lubbers dropped out of the race, Germany's Bild am Sonntag weekly reported on Saturday.

In a report from Brussels released ahead of publication on Sunday, the paper quoted U.S. diplomats as saying they liked Mr. Van den Broek, 59, the EC commissioner for foreign and security policy.

"The U.S. government has absolutely nothing against a candidate from the Netherlands, but rather was against

Lubbers from the beginning," it quoted one diplomat as saying.

It said the U.S. diplomats praised Mr. Van den Broek, a former Dutch foreign minister, for strengthening ties with Washington and making the Netherlands an "especially reliable ally."

In an unusually public row with its European allies, Washington torpedoed a bid by Mr. Lubbers, the former Dutch premier, for the alliance's senior post. The Netherlands withdrew his candidacy on Friday.

NATO member states have sought to limit the damage of the dispute.

Would-be Filipino hijacker held in Kuwait, report says

KUWAIT (AP) — Airport security officers have foiled an attempt to hijack a Kuwait jetliner and arrested a Filipino allegedly recruited for the job by the Iraqi intelligence, a pro-government daily reported Saturday.

The Filipino was arrested Thursday after he arrived from Cyprus to catch a Kuwait Airways flight to Bangkok and Manila, the newspaper Al Anba said.

Security officials found in his possession a machine-gun, small arms, ammunition, four passports and catalogues of civilians aircraft and weapons, Al Anba said.

Government officials could not be reached for comment, and the paper did not disclose

its sources.

Al Anba said the Filipino told interrogators that he had been recruited by Iraqi intelligence agents in Cyprus. During seven months of training on the island, he was being paid \$3,000 a month.

The suspect, according to Al Anba, had been instructed to seize the aircraft and demand ransom and the release of prisoners jailed in Kuwait for collaborating with Iraqi forces, who overran Kuwait in August, 1990.

Hundreds of Iraqis and other Arabs were convicted of collaboration and given long prison terms after the liberation of Kuwait in February 1991.

Sudan rebels claim advance on Juba

CAIRO (Agencies) — Sudanese rebels are closing on Juba, the capital of southern Sudan, in their latest offensive, rebel leader John Garang said in an interview published on Saturday, as Sudan accused Uganda and Eritrea of supporting the rebel movement.

"SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army) forces are close to Juba and we are continuing our offensive towards Juba," Colonel Garang told the Arabic daily Al Hayat.

He said the offensive by the southern rebels, which began Oct. 25, had "taken control of 11 towns."

There was no independent confirmation of the claims,

and in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, a government daily reported that government troops had repulsed the SPLA attacks around Juba at Parajok, Magwi and Ashwa.

The Al Engaz Al Watani daily also claimed that Ugandan and Eritrean forces had participated in attacks with the SPLA but said government forces had "destroyed 70 per cent of the Ugandan forces, paralysed their movement and driven them out of the battle completely."

The daily said it held prisoners of war (PoWs) from the Ugandan fourth division and tank crew from Eritrea.

"The PoWs revealed that an ambassador of a Western

nation in a neighbouring country supervised the planning and execution of the Ugandan offensive on border areas in south Sudan," the paper said.

The prisoners said that the Ugandan offensive was aimed at securing a buffer zone in southern Sudan, the paper added.

Col. Garang, however, denied accusations by Khartoum that Ugandan and Tanzanian troops "fight alongside SPLA forces" or that "our forces are backed by Ethiopia or Eritrea."

Khartoum has threatened to send troops into Uganda in revenge for the claimed support of the Sudanese rebels, although Kampala denies in-

tervening and has made light of the Sudanese threats.

SPLA commander Chol Lual told reporters at the Sudanese border town of Ten-Ten on Wednesday that the rebel forces were just 36 kilometres from Juba.

Col. Garang also said the SPLA had cornered and ousted government forces from 10 towns and villages in Eastern Equatoria.

"(Government) talk aims to cover up its lies to the people which it has told the war is over. The SPLA has, however, begun a large offensive and the government, unable to explain to the people, says Ugandan and Tanzanian troops are fighting with us."

COLUMN

3 World War I veterans die after news of decorations

PARIS (AFP) — Three French veterans of World War I died from emotional shock when they were told they had been named to the Legion of Honour, France's highest military decoration, the Veterans' Ministry said here Friday. The three former soldiers were among 1,355 veterans of the great war, which erupted in 1914 and ended Nov. 11, 1918, to be so honoured. The decorations were to be awarded at ceremonies Saturday marking the armistice. The dean of France's World War I veterans is 110-year-old Bernard Delholm.

Music drowned out by Sri Lanka war

COLOMBO (R) — War rages in the north of Sri Lanka but the band won't play on. The Sri Lanka Philharmonic Players' Society has downed instruments and cancelled the rest of the season, a newspaper said Saturday. The government has urged middle class Sri Lankans to cut down on parties, banquets and general having fun while soldiers die battling Tamil separatists in the north. The orchestra called it quits "due to the prevailing situation in the country with a view of showing solidarity with the efforts of our armed forces," the Island newspaper said. The season's four remaining concerts would be rescheduled, it added.

'Global warming could cool W. Europe'

LONDON (R) — Global warming could increase the amount of fresh water entering the North Atlantic, cooling Western Europe by several degrees Celsius, a German oceanographer said. "It would be a major reshaping of the way in which the climate system works," Stefan Rahmstorf said in an article published in the journal New Scientist. A climatic change could be caused since a warm atmosphere can hold more moisture and result in increased rain, Mr. Rahmstorf, from the University of Kiel, said. The Atlantic conveyor belt, an oceanic feature which helps warm Western Europe, could grind to a halt if the amount of freshwater entering the North Atlantic each second rose by an estimated 60,000 cubic metres. Under the conveyor belt, cold, dense water in the North sinks rapidly before travelling south in the ocean's depths. Part of the warm surface water in the Gulf stream is therefore pulled northwards where it emits heat and sinks. "It does not matter whether the extra freshwater is added at low or high latitudes — all it has to do is dilute the ocean water so that cooling in the north is no longer enough to make it sink," Mr. Rahmstorf said.

Israel eases closure of West Bank, Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli authorities on Saturday eased the closure of the Palestinian territories imposed after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, an armistice spokesman said. All men aged 18 and above possessing Israeli permits were allowed to travel to their jobs in Israel. However, only those aged 18 and above had been given permits to enter the Jerusalem area, when the closure was eased on Tuesday.

French rally for Israel-Arab peace

PARIS (R) — Several hundred people demonstrated in front of the French capital on Sunday in support of Israel's Labour government and to oppose Israeli peace process. Demonstrators gathered in front of the Elysee Palace in Paris, a residence of the French president, and holding placards reading "We allowed Rabin to die, we won't let the peace process die too."

Kinkel refuses to resign over Iran

BERLIN (R) — Bloodied German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel defended his resignation after absorbing the handling of relations with Iran. "I will remain in my post," Kinkel told a news conference on Sunday.

Rare Philippine eagle chick dies after hatching

DAVAO, Philippines (AFP) — The first Philippine eagle bred by a pair in captivity, died shortly after hatching, setting back efforts to save this rare bird, it was announced Saturday. The eagle chick, named "Mindanaw," died from respiratory problems, Friday after having difficulty emerging from its shell, officials of the Philippine Eagle Foundation Inc. said. The eagle was born through the foundation's captive breeding programme, aimed at saving the Philippine eagle from extinction.

Rare supports French A-tests

PARIS (AFP) — British Minister John Major robustly defended President Jacques Chirac's decision to carry out nuclear tests in the South Pacific, speaking in Australia, where he was attending a Commonwealth summit, dismissing "outrage" and "gratuitous" French support over the French tests in September.

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